EQUALIZING X DISTORT

Volume 12, Issue 01 | Welcome to Meaford | March 2012

SONS OF ISHMAEL

SONS OF ISHMAEL were a little known band from the town of Meaford, Ontario. They were best known for their self-released EP titled "Hayseed Hardcore" which ranked in Pushead's top 100 hardcore singles for the 80's. They will be forever known for their opening track "Small Town Mentality" with the parody of rednecks making fun of them and the salutation that gives you a taste of what it is like to be a punk in a small town. I co-hosted a radio show with Mike Canzi who played bass and then guitar in the band's predominant line up. He would keep me up to date with ideas behind the songs they were developing. I always felt that SONS OF ISHMAEL were bringing something new to the table in terms of song ideas. So when they agreed to to do this interview I figured this would be my one chance to garner insight into the songs and experiences the band went through. Here is a look at SONS OF ISHMAEL from start to finish.



1985 - DMZ, Toronto

Introduce yourselves and tell us what you did in SONS OF ISHMAEL … starting with Tim.

Tim: Tim Freeborn … vocals …

Mike: Very carefully chosen: he didn't say "singer" …

I appreciate the dramatic pause.

T: … and bass, for a short period.

M: Mike Canzi, guitar and bass.

At different times.

M: Yeah. Well, sometimes at the same time.

Chris: Chris Black, drums and driver.

That beast.

Paul: Paul Morris, guitar.

T: And vocals.

M: You also played bass.

P: Did I?

M: I've seen you play bass.

T: At our last show you did.

P: I wasn't sure about that.

T: Putrid Live III.

Ditch Dog (*laughing*): You guys are so friggin' pretentious.

What about you, Ditch Dog?

DD: Ah, yes, yes … Glenn "Ditch Dog" Poirier. I play guitar, was occasional driver, marimba, xylophone, twelve-string guitar, effects talk box.

That's quite a variety of instruments.

C: But not in this band.

DD: You wanna one up? And I have a mandolin. So there.

P: I have a harmonica.

Did you ever break it out with SONS OF ISHMAEL? The mandolin?

DD: Of course not.

When did SONS OF ISHMAEL start? What was the beginning?

T: In the summer of '81, before grade ten, I ran into my friend Kenny Campbell, whose family had moved away for a year, and we discovered that both of us had heard punk during that year; he'd picked up the RAMONES' *Road to Ruin*, and I'd heard the American version of the first CLASH album, the one that opens with "Clash City Rockers." Soon after, as we'd picked up more punk records from the late '70s and early '80s, we decided, on the basis of my very limited ability to play the guitar and his owning a small P.A., that we should try to form a band. After a couple of years, when we finally decided to do something about it, Kenny decided that he would play bass rather than sing because there didn't seem to be a shortage of guitar players – none of whom was as bad as I was. I took up the microphone. In May of 1984, I, Ditch Dog, and a couple of other people, played three cover songs as TOXIC SHOCK at a high-school talent show, and that summer we changed our name, because we started writing our own songs, to ANGRY THALIDOMIDE BABIES, recorded the *Coat Hanger Abortion* demo, sold two-dozen copies of that, changed our name to SONS OF ISHMAEL in February of '85 for our first Toronto show, at Larry's Hideaway.



O.K., can I ask you about ANGRY THALIDOMIDE BABIES? You just did the one recording?

T: That's correct.

Who was in the original line-up, aside from Ditch Dog?

DD: Actually, I wasn't in ATB.

T: Yeah, Ditch Dog was in TOXIC SHOCK …

… and you dumped him …

T: … yes, heartlessly …

DD: Left me by the side of the road.

T: ANGRY THALIDOMIDE BABIES was … let me see …

DD: Was that Andrew Brideau?

T: Andrew played guitar, and he later played on *Hayseed Hardcore*. Matt played guitar; he played drums in SONS OF ISHMAEL, but not on the record. James played drums; he became an optometrist. Kenny played bass, and I was the vocalist.

DD: And Mama sang tenor …

T: So sixty percent of the people who played on *Hayseed Hardcore* were in ATB.

C: How many tapes were made?

T: A couple dozen; we sold them on computer, like, C-15 cassettes.

M: Did you sell them outside of Meaford?

T: We sold them exclusively outside of Meaford.

C: I have one, so I have one of only twenty four ever made?

P: I have one as well.

T: Something like that.

Those were data cassettes, so they sounded even crappier than other cassettes would in terms of quality.

T: Actually, someone digitized it, and it sounds a little bit better because the surface noise just gives it a little something extra.

M: It has a 1920's sound to it.

T: It does, yes, absolutely.

A charm, an antique charm.

DD: If you listen to the ATB tape, you'll hear some SOI classics like "Elvis Incorporated."

That was originally written as an ATB song. O.K., how did the band develop into SONS OF ISHMAEL?

C: How do most supergroups form?

T: Well, here's the thing, trying to put together a punk-rock band in a town of four-thousand people involves any number of compromises …

I'm sure, especially because punk wasn't so popular. Well, what was Meaford like? Maybe we should start there.

T: It's the self-proclaimed "Golden Town" …

What does that mean?

T: … which means that senior citizens like living there.

It has a museum there, the military museum?

T: No, there is a museum, and there is a military base outside of town.

DD: An inland-training base. And, as the Golden Town, it's also the home of the first golden shower.

Is that right?

T: That's not true, but what is true is that there is a park there, one of the founding families of the town had the surname "Raper," so across from the Dairy Queen is a Raper's Park which (*laughter*) – I'm not joking …

DD: Oh, I didn't know that was their family name. Boy, did I ever get that wrong. I should not have been hanging out there.

T: Yes, indeed. During the politically correct '70s it was renamed McCarroll Park, which is how I knew it growing up, and then there was a rise in civic pride in the '90s, and it reverted to Raper's Park …

DD: That was under the stewardship of Mayor Crapper, right?

T: Yes, Gord Crapper, Mayor Crapper, was behind that …

A series of unfortunate names.

EQUALIZING DISTORT

VOLUME 12, ISSUE 01

EQUALIZING-X-DISTORT MONTHLY is an extension of the weekly radio show heard on CIUT 89.5 FM every Sunday nights from 10:00pm 'til midnight (Participants: Rob Ferraz, D'Arcy Rix-Hayes, Stephe Perry, and Ed Pyves).

The show dedicates itself to the underground hardcore punk scene. There is a particular emphasis on international releases in the developing straight edge, garage, Killed By Death, power violence, d-beat, re-issues, dark hardcore, and crossover scenes which means we play material like Abusive Action, the Spits, Manic Depressives, George Harrison, Disarm, Moskwa, Legion666, and Death Crisis.

There is a weekly demo feature (paying homage to the cassette format), weekly event listings, and a monthly top 10 retrospective look at new releases.

Equalizing-X-Distort
CIUT 89.5 FM
Sundays 10:00 pm - midnight
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CIUT 89.5 FM - "Equalizing Distort"
Top 10 Hardcore Releases
for January 2012

Band	Title	Format	Label
1. LAUTSTURMER	"Man fods, stampler in, och..."	ep	Not Enough
2. UNLEARN	s/t	LP	Deranged
3. UNRULED	"Time is Running Out"	ep	Schizophrenic
4. KVORTERINGEN	"Storfinanasen"	ep	De Nihil
5. RAPID LOSS	"A Dark Place"	ep	Self-Released
6. VIIMEINEN KOLONNA	"Luonnoton Poistuma"	ep	Roku / Gasmask / Psychedelica
7. ANATOMI-71	"Fran Primat til Reptil"	CD	Halvfabrikat
8. LEGION666	"the Final Days"	LP	Schizophrenic
9. KAUNEUS JA TERVEYS	"Puhtaus ja Hygienia"	ep	Urban Gorilla
10. IT'S NOW	"Resister y Exister"	ep	Commitment

Equalizing Distort can be heard every Sunday night on CIUT 89.5 FM at 10:00 pm. The top 10 countdown can be heard in its entirety, complete with previews of the picks and analysis on the previous month in hardcore, on the last Sunday of the month.

DD: A town of crappers and rapers …

T: Well, I learned relatively recently that when the land was being surveyed before it became Meaford, it was known generically as "The Queen's Bush." But, once again … politically correct '90s, Raper's Park, that was out, and now it's known simply as "Fred Raper Park," "raper" sounding like either an imperative verb or the surname of one of the founding families.

C: I have a question. Is the police station still a Tim Horton's?

T: For a while, the police station did move into what used to be a donut store, Swiss Mountain Donuts.

How convenient.

T: But, so, compromises, meaning that we were a "scene" of two or maybe three people who were interested in punk, so the people …

You had to convince other people …

T: … we had to convince other people, and, very generously, there were some other people who played music or who were interested in playing music who played with us. In the case of the one guitar player, Andrew, my revisionist telling is that we exchanged services. I played bass in his heavy-metal cover band, and he played guitar in that band. But, so, ANGRY THALIDOMIDE BABIES; the drummer's dad thought that name was offensive, so the drummer was thinking that he might not play with us because his dad was hassling him, so, in order to appease the father, we decided that we would change our name. So, there you go: compromises from Day One, I don't even know why you're talking to us … it's so shameless. That's why we changed our name, and that coincided with our show at Larry's Hideaway in February.

While we're on the topic of names, where does the name SONS OF ISHMAEL come from? I understand that had something to do with the drummer, maybe?

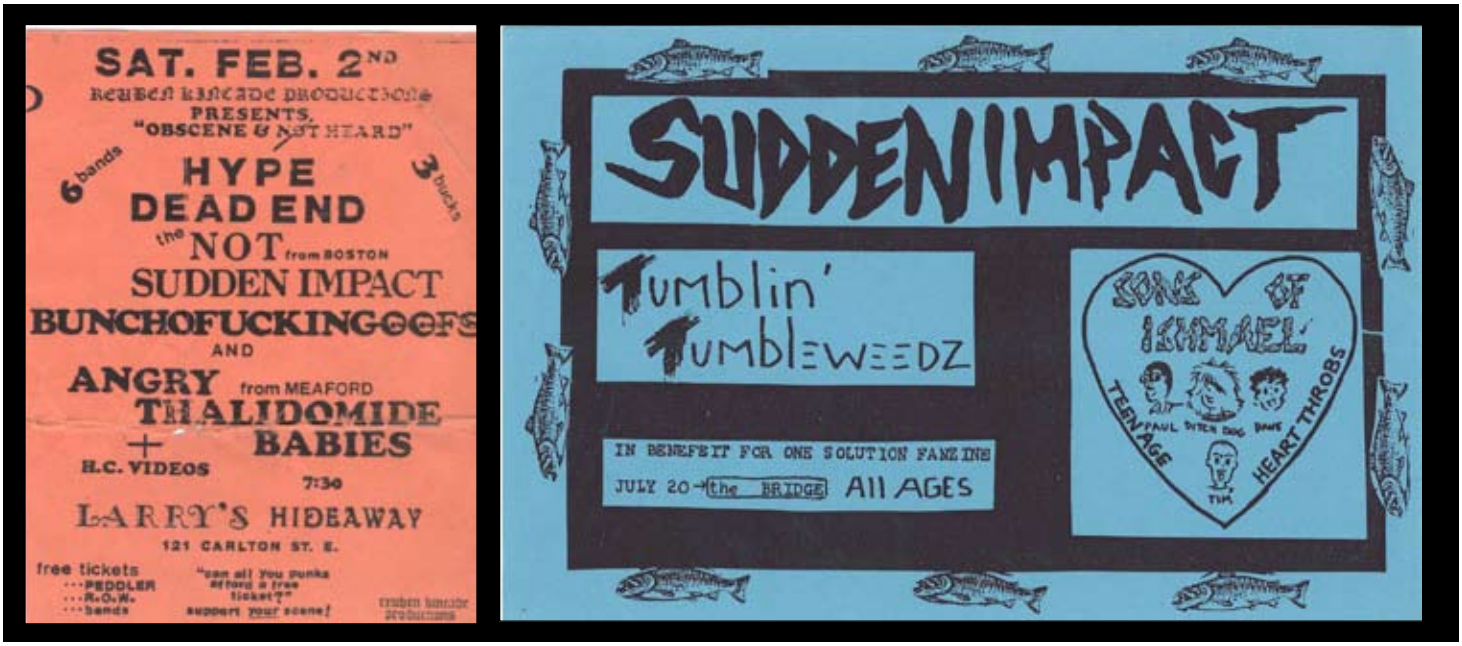
T: No, actually, being … Meaford is a two-horse, one-book town …

The bible being the book?

T: Yes, that was the Book, and our bass player,

THeRASH #2, Fall 1985







Kenny, his parents were involved in the Pentecostal church in town, so he knew his Bible. So, because we were self-pitying teenagers, we thought, "We're outcasts, clearly, because we listen to hardcore, so, who's an outcast? I don't fuckin' know … Ishmael? Yeah, O.K., SONS OF ISHMAEL."

M: But if you type that into a search engine, almost every website you'll go to is related to Islam.

Oh, really?

M: Not that I've ever done this, but…(*laughter*)

DD: So, they owe us royalties?

T: Yes, they do.

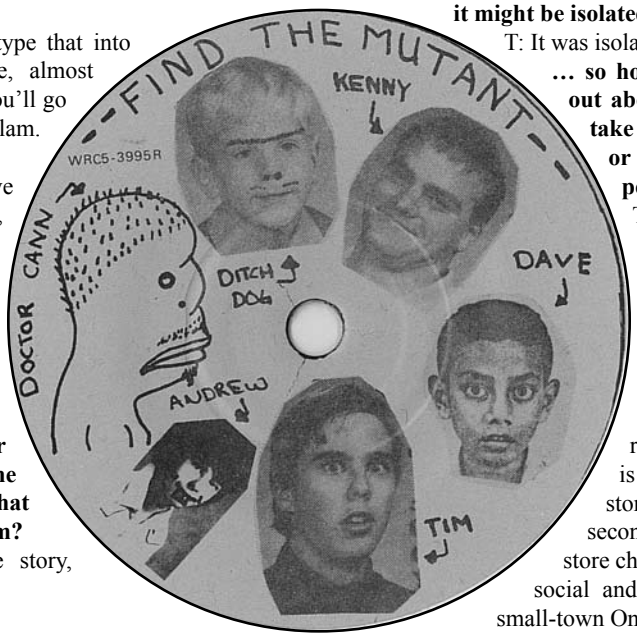
So, do you know the character Ishmael in The Bible? What happened to him?

T: What is the story, actually? Uhh …

C: Son of Job?

DD: Hold on, wasn't he swallowed by a whale?

T: He swallowed a whale in the pornographic film of the same name …



DD: A sperm whale.

T: Yes. The patriarch, whose name I don't remember [Duh: it's Abraham], had an infertile wife, so he has a son with a concubine called Hagar. Miraculously, his wife …

DD: Hagar was a Viking.

T: … does bear him a child, and so they had to be gotten rid of.

I think Christian mythology followed Norse mythology.

DD: Of course it did. It's all from the same book.

Hence, probably the similarity in stories.

DD (*laughing*): Between Hagar the Horrible and the SONS OF ISHMAEL? Tell me more about the Wizard of Id …

Being from Meaford, how did you get into punk? Because it seems like a small town, like it might be isolated from …

T: It was isolated.

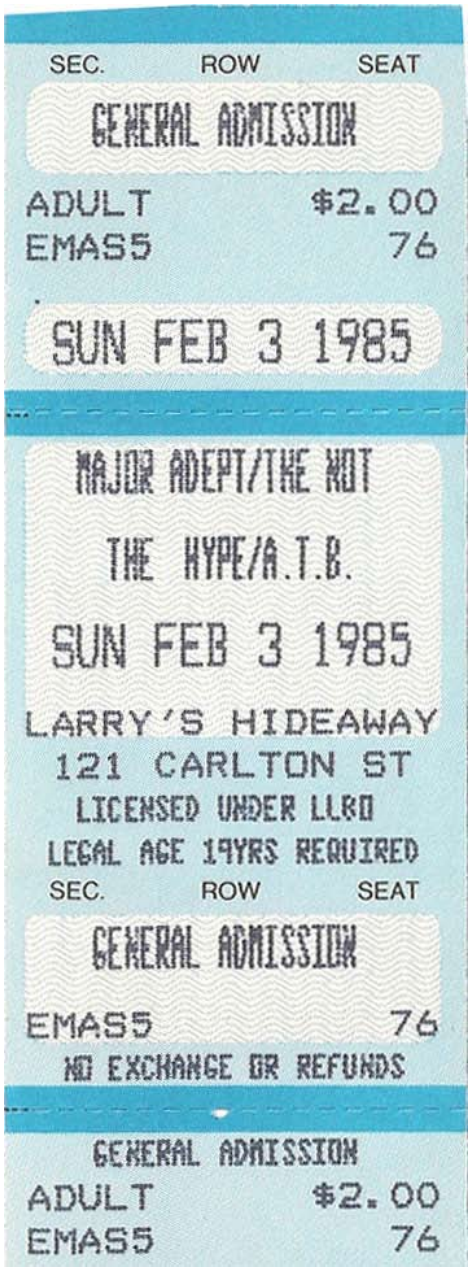
… so how did you find out about it? Did you take trips to Toronto, or did you write people?

T: No not before, say, 1983, anyway. You could buy records in town; Stedman's sold records, Becker's sold records … the first is a department-store chain, the second a convenience-store chain, both hubs of social and cultural life in small-town Ontario.

Becker's?

T: Rock records.

DD: Yeah, like the hits of … what was that band … CLEVELAND?





CLEVELAND?

DD: Yeah, they were a cover band that had records on the shelves at Becker's.

T: Oh, I don't remember that …

DD: I remember that …

T: … but you had to drive to Owen Sound: they had record stores, and my brother bought the first CLASH record, and I heard that and, actually, I'd read about punk rock but had no idea what it sounded like, so that first CLASH record was the first punk record that I heard. My older brother, who still is in his LED ZEPPELIN phase today, bizarrely bought this record, and it was a great record. I couldn't believe what I was hearing. So, after hearing that, one goes to Barrie, fifty miles east, and one could actually find Canadian punk records, like the FORGOTTEN REBELS and SLANDER, and the BATTERED WIVES, and NASH THE SLASH, and eventually, one goes fifty miles further south to Toronto, where one could actually find contemporary hardcore records. And going there, we found *Maximum Rock'n'Roll*, which then sort of opened things up and, in fact, convinced us that maybe we could record something in our band because someone sympathetic might be interested in reviewing it, which is how we sold our ATB tapes.

Who would have been early influences on SONS OF ISHMAEL? And the reason why I ask this is because I often see reviews comparing the band to DRI.

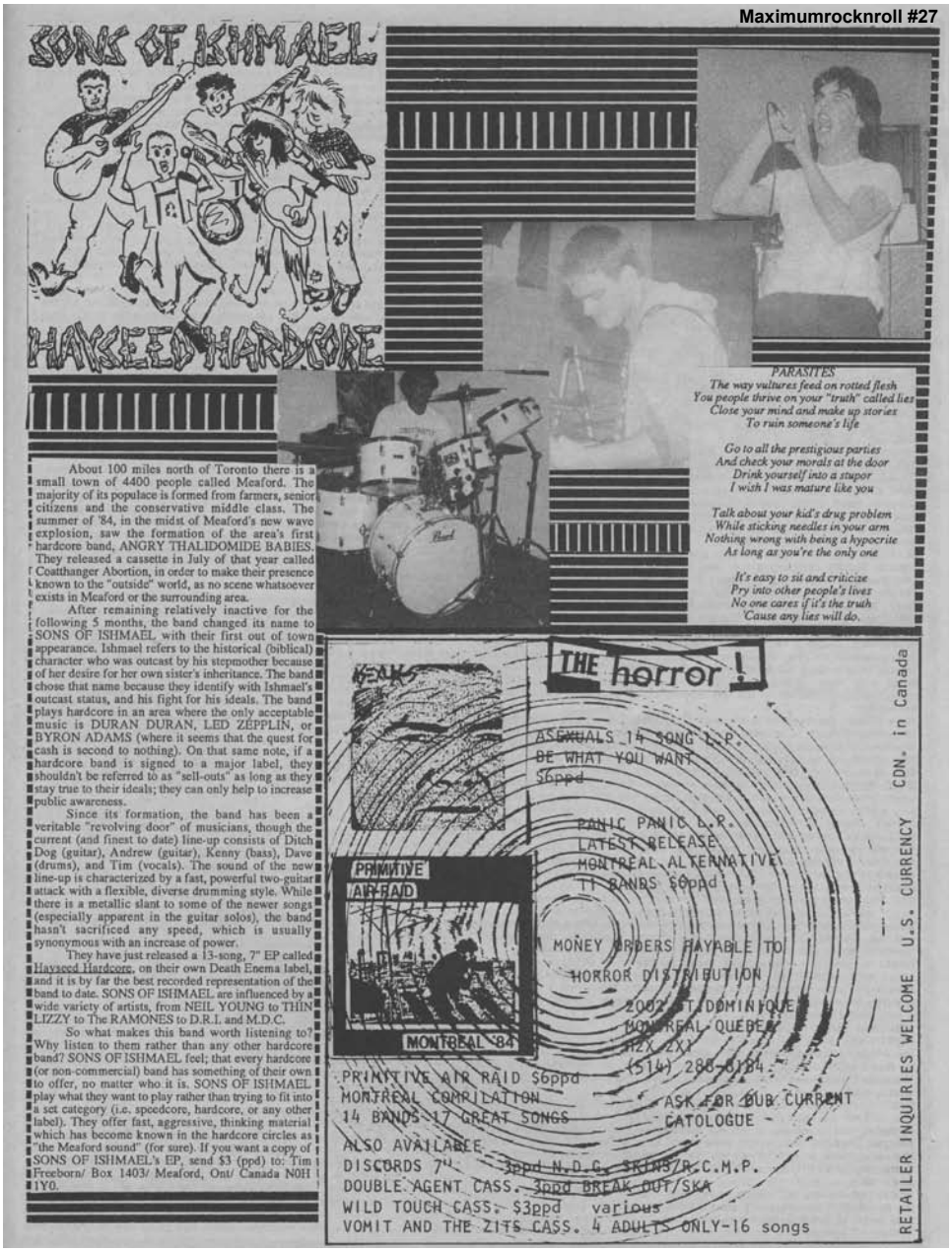
T: Well, we had those records …

M: I hear JERRY'S KIDS.

I've also seen JERRY'S KIDS come up a lot, too.

DD: I liked VOIVOD; that kept creeping in for me.

T: '83/'84? Certainly, when we found out that there were hardcore bands – because, probably for the first three years we were sort of still in the '70s – which was still very progressive, because Meaford was still in the '40s – so, when we found out there were bands like MDC. The records that we had and really loved were, on the one hand,





the predictable ones: JERRY'S KIDS, MDC, CRUCIFIX, the YOUTH YOUTH YOUTH record was also a big influence: great songs, and, especially, lyrics that went beyond "Fuck this fuckin' fucked-up shit, motherfucker!" on the other hand, everything that *SST* did, we loved those records too, just as much.

Like early *SST*? As opposed to the art phase?

T: Yeah, the five flagship bands: BLACK FLAG, HUSKER DU, MEAT PUPPETS, MINUTEMEN, and SACCHARINE TRUST. Those are all great bands, so … that's what we listened to.

I went to school at York, and I was wearing a SONS OF ISHMAEL shirt, I was telling you this story earlier, that a classmate of mine told me of a school dance you played in Meaford. How did you get on to that show? How did you get that gig? And how was that received?

T: That was an afternoon show …

Tell us about the show first.

T: The reason we got it: my cousin happened to be the social convener for the students' council, so I approached him and said, "Wouldn't it be a great idea to have a punk-rock sock hop? And we'll play at it." And he thought that was a good idea, so we played it.

He thought that before the show? Even after?

T: Even after, I think he thought it was okay, but I don't think people liked it, predictably enough. In fact, in the yearbook that year, the student-council president listed our show as one of the year's low lights in the academic and social calendar. And even our drummer, in fact, so we played our set …

So, lots of public humiliation.

T: Yeah, yeah. And our drummer, when we finished playing, he was sort of embarrassed to be playing this music, so he said into the microphone, "Now, let's hear some *real* music," cutting to the PLATINUM BLONDE that his friends had cued up to play so, yes, it wasn't received well.

Were there many shows in Meaford? Did you play many shows there?

T: No.

M: There was at least one more.

T: In order to fund *Hayseed Hardcore*, we put on one at the arena, and three …

Did you bring some bands in?

T: … other local cover bands. We put on the show and kept all the money, because …

M: None of the other bands would have taken that initiative.

T: That's right. You have to understand that with only a couple of exceptions bands did not play anywhere; they practiced … so the fact of actually there being a show was in itself enough for them to agree to play.

But it was at an arena?

T: It was at a hall beside the arena.

And you had to rent sound equipment and things like that?

T: Yeah, that's right largely because the drummer whom I maligned above knew how to work a mixing board, but it was fine, and we made maybe five- or six-hundred dollars, which is more than I think we ever made anywhere after that. So from that we paid to record *Hayseed Hardcore* twice, actually, and paid to have the record pressed.

I read that the *Hayseed Hardcore* record was recorded on May 26, 1985. You said it was recorded twice?

T: Yeah, that's right: there's an earlier version.

DD: Left side and right side, full stereo.


Kenny Campbell

From the first blast out of your speakers, you know you're in for a treat--wham!--out pours thrash ripper after ripper. Over a dozen raves in a straight-ahead style, much like the first DRI release. Wicked! - Tim Yohannan (from *Maximumrocknroll* #27, August 1985)



1985



1987



2010

T: We recorded as a four-piece, with that drummer, and then we added Glenn and we got another drummer, Dave, and we re-recorded it. I can't remember when we did the first recording, it was maybe March, probably March break of that year.

C: Does it still exist?

T: I have a cassette copy of it.

DD: If I remember, it was much cleaner sounding.

T: Yeah, it was much cleaner sounding.

So you didn't press them both?

T: No, we only pressed the second one.

The second recording, with Glenn on it.



T: That's right. It was the same songs, except there was one song we added on side two, the song the lyrics for which were printed on the back cover …

M: "Another Groovy Tune."

T: Yeah, the only reason the lyrics of that song were printed was because it was added after the fact; the lyric sheet had already been done … and you can hear the difference, too: Dave was copying the drummer of the original one, so he was playing it very straight, but that song, he was playing it the way that he heard it, which was not much snare drum and in fact a lot of high hat. It's weird; it's a weird-sounding song on that record, and that's the reason not to mention the double-lead-guitar solo, which Kenny, who had just discovered metal, encouraged Andrew and Glenn, who needed no encouragement in that area, to do.

DD: "Experimental punk."

Were they both recorded at Accusonic?

T: Yep.

How did you find out about the studio? It seems like a lot of bands from Toronto recorded at that studio.

T: I think that during '84, we found out that there was a Toronto scene, currently active, so we bought some of those demos, like *Freaked Out* by SUDDEN IMPACT, the DIRECT ACTION demo, WRATH's demo, and I think that all of those had been recorded at Accusonic. I think at that time, too, we were …

But how were you able to find out about the studio? I mean, sometimes that's not enough, right?

T: It might have been that Steve Milo (SUDDEN IMPACT) had been in contact with us, and he might have recommended it. That's probably how that happened.

How was the record received? When I talk to people about SONS OF ISHMAEL, *Hayseed Hardcore* is what people remember, that first record. Do you remember what some of the reviews might have been for that record? I think in Europe it was a big deal.

T: *Flipside*, *Thrasher*, and *MRR* were the three widest-circulated magazines reviewing hardcore records, and it got a really enthusiastic review in each one, which led to lots of people from Europe buying it and then trading their records for it, multiple copies. So those three magazines were the impetus for people to buy it through the mail. I think that probably half of them were sold single (mail-ordered) copies, maybe half of those went to Europe.

In trades. How many was the initial press? Was it just a thousand? Five hundred?

T: 550, I think it was.

And I understand you sold out within three months, is that true?

T: Yeah, we sold them really quickly, and didn't think about re-pressing it because we weren't doing anything, really, by the fall of '85.

But it did get pressed again …

T: It did get pressed again, in the spring of '87, or late spring. Just before we went to play in the States, we re-printed it.

To have some available, right?

T: Yeah.

P: So we could eat. (*Pause*) It didn't help.

How many times did that record get re-pressed? Just twice?

T: Yeah, there were the two seven-inch versions, and then Craig Caron in Hamilton is releasing it shortly, presently even, on his label, with some extra tracks it came out during the summer of 2010.

M: Will this be on a compact disc?

T: A twelve-inch vinyl record.

M: Get out.

T: Stereo long-playing vinyl record. Seventeen songs, I think.

I heard maybe that the ATB demo might be on one side. Is that correct or no?

Vinyl compilations

Photo above: 1987 - Meaford Arena



Over the Top Records, 1986



Still Thinking Records, 1987



Sacro Egoismo Records, 1991

T: He suggested that, but I thought it was probably best not to do it; they're different bands, different sounds, two dozen people have heard the ATB tape, so I don't think people are clamouring to hear it. I thought it made more sense to add the songs we recorded later that year with the same line-up at Accusonic, just to have the complete recordings of that particular line-up.



So there were other songs that didn't make the seven inch?

T: That's right. We recorded them later. Once the seven inch came out, Kalv Piper from HERESY was putting out a series of flexi-disc compilations, and he wrote, asking if we would be interested in contributing a song, so we just went and recorded the four or five songs that we had. Three new songs, plus a resurrected version of "Divine Deception," from the ATB tape.

M: And was that ever released on a flexi?

T: No.

So this will be unreleased material?

T: Well, those songs were released elsewhere …

DD: Like on the *Apathy? Never!* compilation?

T: Yes.

P: And on the *No Taste* compilation.

T: And there's one song that wasn't released and won't be released. It was kind of …

M: Crummy?

T: Well, it was a new song that we didn't really play that well.

DD: Which one was that?

P: "Be a Man."

T: "Human Waste," I believe, was the title. It's the last song of those on the tape …

The song "Small Town Mentality" is one of my all-time favourite songs, and I guess one of lots of people who are familiar with SONS OF ISHMAEL. Is this song about living in Meaford, as the introduction would suggest?

T: I think the meaning is fairly transparent, yes.

DD: It wasn't too cryptic.

I heard a story once – I think it might have been from Paul – of visiting Tim in Meaford, and Tim might have gone out, you guys went out, and you looked for cops, and, when they came, you kind of ran the other way, trying to get them to chase you?

P: Oh, that's right, that's probably a story of Tim …

Do you know anything about this?

T: I forgot about that …

Just something to do in Meaford?

T: Something to do, yes.

P: There's not much to do in small towns, so you have to entertain yourself. I think when we were there, we just lay down in the street, just for something to do.

Have people written you about the song "Small Town Mentality"? Because when I first heard the song, I thought about things like rednecks and rockers who used to pick on punks at the time, and I could instantly relate to the song. It was a common experience even growing up in the suburbs, so it wasn't necessarily someone who had to live in a small town. So, has anyone ever written you about this, like, to say "Thanks for writing that song, I totally relate." (*Silence***) Nothing?**

T: No.

Well, I'm saying I relate.

T: O.K.

M: I lived in a bigger city; I grew up in Windsor, and I have a pretty similar experience. Leaving my high school after my very last exam, there were a group of long-haired dirtballs just hanging around, and as I walked by, they said, "Nice lid." And it was just 'cause I had a weird haircut. All I had, in fact, was a mullet, but at the time, that was too much for Windsor.

C: Sault Ste. Marie.

M: Yeah. Same story.

Do you have a favourite song from *Hayseed Hardcore*?

(*Silence. Laughter.*)

T: No.

DD: I like "Break Free" and "Democracy." That was a fun one: strung together. They were always fun to play.

M: True enough.

I was introduced to SONS OF ISHMAEL with the new line-up, so I didn't actually see the original line-up. Most of you were living in Toronto at the time. How did the band develop into the line-up that it became? So how did these members join? I think I initially met Paul at Finch Station …

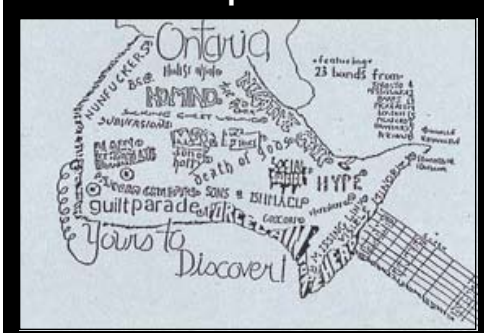
P: Waiting for the Cummer bus …

… and I had just bought the DAYGLO ABORTIONS' *Feed Us a Fetus* record, and you were telling me about how you were playing a show, and that's how I came to find out about you, but would later find out that you were from the Ottawa area. How did you come to join the band?

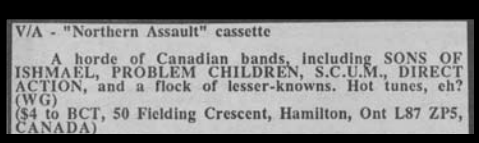
P: I grew up in a small town near Brockville – smaller than Meaford, in fact – and there was, like Meaford, two or three of us into punk, and I think I sent away for some fanzine – it might have been *Wabana Riot* from Newfoundland – and there was some article in there about SONS OF ISHMAEL, and I couldn't believe that there was another band in another small town somewhere, because nobody in small towns listened to this

Cassette compilations

Photo above: 1986 - The Loft, Guelph



Ragamuffin Soldier, 1988

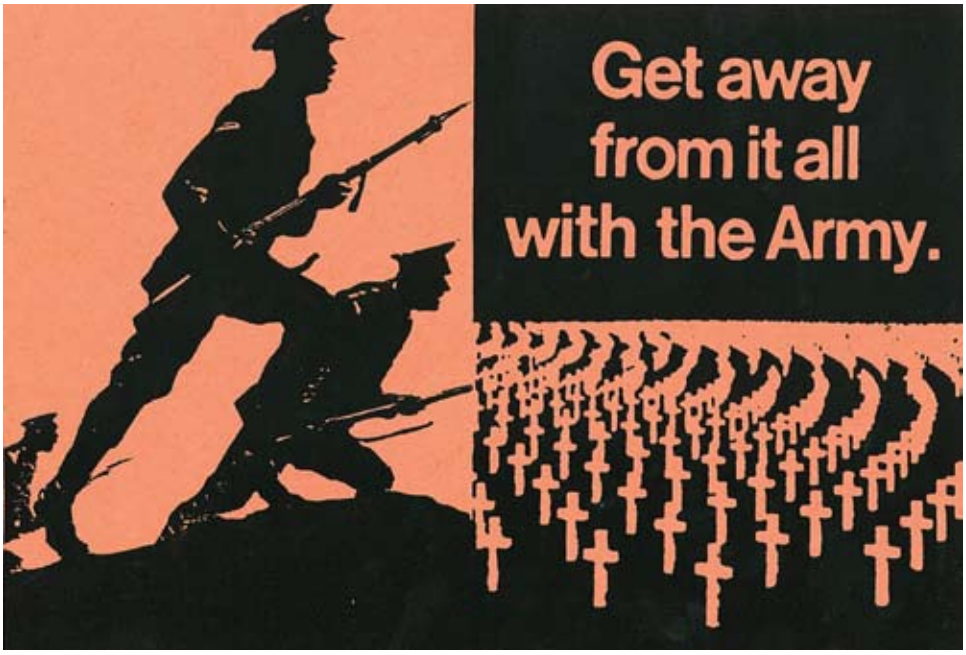

V/A - "Northern Assault" cassette

A horde of Canadian bands, including SONS OF ISHMAEL, PROBLEM CHILDREN, S.C.U.M., DIRECT ACTION, and a flock of lesser-knowns. Hot tunes, eh? (WG)
($4 to BCT, 50 Fielding Crescent, Hamilton, Ont L87 ZP5, CANADA)

BCT, 1987



Fans of Bad Productions, 1990



stuff, so I wrote away to Tim, sent him one of the tapes of the band that I was in, and he sent me back a seven inch, and then we hooked up in Toronto.

What was that band that you were in?

P: We were called DISORDERLY FASHION.

T: If I can jump in: Paul, when sending me the tape, recounted a story – in fact, we never got picked on in Meaford, really – but Paul recounted playing at a party in Athens and someone unplugging them in the middle of a song, and his question was, "Does this shit ever happen to you guys?" And we thought, "Who is this poor soul? Perhaps we can take him under our wing."

DD: You mean adding him was like a sympathy act?

P: Yeah: it wasn't talent.

DD (*laughing*): Sympathy guitar.

Chris, I think you might have been next to join. Is that correct?

C: I think Mike was …

M: We joined at the same time.

P: I had met Mike at an SNFU show around September, when I just moved here. We found him walking along the street.

T: What was he doing when you found him?

P: Grumbling about the show.

M (*mock incredulity*): I was grumbling?

T [to P]: I thought you said that he was grumbling about "the pigs" because they shut the show down early.

P: I think our first words were, "Good show, eh?," I said to Mike. And Mike says, "Enh."

M: Oh, really? I'm sorry …

That actually sounds like something Mike would say.

P: Then, I don't know if it was before or after he joined the band, Mike moved into the house I was living in, and we got him to join the group.

So, Mike, you had moved here from Windsor, right?

M: Uh huh.

To go to school?

M: That's right.

And you and I did a radio show there for some years …

M: That is correct.

… and then you started hanging out with Paul. Is that how you kind of got into the band?

M: Well, as he said, we met for the first time ever walking along Queen Street after a gig – it was an SNFU show – but the weirdest thing of all is before I moved to Toronto, I came here one afternoon to pick my courses at York University, and I was wearing an ASEXUALS t-shirt, and there was a preppy-looking guy also sitting in the waiting room, who – he was also picking his courses – he said, "So, you like the ASEXUALS? So do I," and we started talking, and he told me he was from a small town in eastern Ontario, and his name was Robbie, and I didn't know anything else about him. I chose my courses, he chose his courses, we went our separate ways, and then I run into this idiot on Queen Street, and we're talking …

Paul.

M: ...yes, Paul, and I'm asking where he's from and he said a small town in eastern Ontario, and I think I said, "Do you know Robbie Johnson?," and he did, so …

P: One of the other guys who liked punk in our town.

M: … I knew him before I met him. Sort of.

But you were also in some bands prior in Windsor, right?

M: You really want me to go into this, don't you?

I do, yes. So, what bands did you start out playing in?

M: The first band I was in was called SANITARY NAPKINS.

O.K., and how long did they last for?



M: I don't know …

Did they record anything?

M: Yes.

A demo, or …?

M: Well, the thing is, it was a duo, and we were playing directly into a tape deck, so, yes, there are recordings. Actually, I was playing guitar, and my friend Matt was playing bass, and I didn't have a distortion pedal at the time, so the way we got distortion is, my channel, we turned the recording volume *right* up, so it was quasi-distortion. And then the same two people formed another band called BUTT PLUGS. Same story: there's recordings, mostly of covers, like RAMONES covers, KILLING JOKE covers, that kind of stuff. And then I was in a band called BURNING RECTAL ITCH with that same guy, but this time we actually had a real drummer, Paul Abrash, who went on to play in ONE BLOOD, and now plays in LEGION.



DD: You got a real fixation on bodily openings there, dontcha?

M: Well, you'll notice that the two bands that Tim played in were called TOXIC SHOCK and ANGRY THALIDOMIDE BABIES.

DD: But we were the SONS OF ISHMAEL, not the Sons of Vibrator.

M: Yeah, that's because Tim overruled you.

T: You also have an instructive narrative.

M: Do I?

T: Yes: SANITARY NAPKINS, BUTT PLUGS, BURNING RECTAL ITCH.

M: There's a bit of a pattern there, yeah.

Was DRI out at that point?

M: Yeah.

And so it was a play on that?

M: Umm, turned it into a play on that, so our logo had asterisks instead of "x"s, like DRI had between the letters.

Yeah, right. Did BRI record anything? I remember seeing you on a compilation, right?

M: Yeah, but it was really primitive: we were recording on a ghetto blaster. We would record all of the instrumental tracks at the same time, on a ghetto blaster in Paul Abrash's basement, then we would play that tape on his stereo, and someone would "sing" while the ghetto blaster was taping all that shit together. So, ultra, ultra lo-fi.

Chris, you were in CHARLIE BROWN'S WANG?

C: I was.

And they became MISSING LINK, right?

C: Yes, after I was thrown out of the band.

But they also had some notoriety for a flyer that got banned or something.

C: Yeah: we were gonna play a show at Blondie's, above DMZ, wherever that was …

Well, Blondie's, actually the second DMZ was above Blondie's …

C: Yeah … and there was a flyer for that that featured a cartoon Charlie Brown with his dick hanging out, pissing in a puddle, and it offended people.

P: Nowadays, it's on the back of every truck, with Calvin and Hobbes. Now it's on t-shirts.

DD: Somebody took that poster and made millions.

C: So I never actually played a show with them. We did lots of practicing; I would drive out to Pickering, and we would practice in a basement, but we never got around to playing any shows.

How did you come to join SONS OF ISHMAEL?

C: I saw these guys play, and I thought, "Wow, what a big band, it'd be great to be in a big band like that instead of just practicing in a basement all the time …"

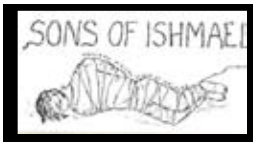
P: I think we were talking to Chris, standing



outside the Bridge or something like that …
C: We were at a show at the Government or RPM; it was KILLING JOKE, or DOA, I think it was?
P: Probably DOA.
C: Yeah, DOA. And I joined then.
P: I wouldn't go see KILLING JOKE.
C: I did – they were great.
And Mike, you originally played bass, right, in the initial line-up because there were already two guitars?
M: Yeah, that's correct.
So this was pretty much the final line-up that then went on to record the album, right?
C: The first one, yeah.
The *Pariah Martyr Demands a Sacrifice*.
M: I don't know what you're talking about.
Were you not on it?
P: He's denying the existence of the album.
T: Of what record are you speaking?
The LP that came out on *Over the Top Records*.
C: That cannot be named … it cannot be listened to.
DD: We were a little disappointed with that, but we have no one to blame but ourselves. We should have paid attention to doing it properly instead of just ripping through it.
Where was it recorded, was it also recorded at Accusonic or somewhere else?
P: It was in a basement on Jones Avenue.
C: O.K., the story is that we heard it was a studio, and somebody thought that was a good studio, and it was actually a reggae studio or something? And we did not understand what kind of studio it was.
M: We misunderstood: I think my understanding was that we were going to record at the place SACRIFICE or SLAUGHTER recorded at, but we got it wrong. It was a "MIDI" studio, whatever that means. I don't think they'd ever recorded guitars before.
P: I thought it meant "midway between Queen and Bloor."
T: SACRIFICE recorded at a studio with a similar name …


1987 - Tempe, Arizona

M: Oh, that's right.
C: So it must have been good …
So there was a misunderstanding.
T: A big one.
C: And this studio had one-inch tape, no, half-inch tape, that was another big problem …
DD (*laughing*): Data tape?
Did *Over the Top* offer to do you a record, and you went in to do a recording? How did that … or did the recording come first, or how did this all work? Because I think I remember hearing about a record coming out before I actually heard you had gone to the studio.
M: Sounds about right.
Who's the guy who did the label?
T: Karl Etter, from Guildford, Connecticut, contacted us in early 1987 and asked if we would be interested in putting a record on his label, and he …
That was on the strength of *Hayseed Hardcore*?
T: … yeah, and he gave us some money to record the record – a couple hundred dollars – …
DD: Yeah, we blew that on hookers and jujubes.
T: … and he said … I think that the most attractive point was this: he said, "Get it to me by a certain date and I'll have copies for you to sell when you're on tour."
In the States? This would have been your first tour?
T: That's right: June, July, and August of '87. So, of course that didn't happen. I think we just weren't thinking very clearly, and I think, as





Over the Top, 1987

Mount the Penis Sceptre description in a zine by the same name






1987 - Slither Club, Toronto

Glenn said …

Well, maybe also inexperience; you had been in a studio maybe twice, right?

M: Like I was saying earlier, the whole concept of 4/4 time I didn't catch on to that until I was out of this band, so we were under-experienced, some of us.

Well, there are some numbers that reflect 3/3 time or a polka beat …

M: Paul.

… but we'll get into that. So tell me about the disappointment of the recording.

C: We recorded it, and when we started to listen to it out in the van, it was very thin, and it didn't have any bass, so we deliberated over that for weeks and weeks, like "What are we gonna do? Go back and re-record it or re-mix it?" And we kept hearing about special technology that could add more bass, and it was just a nightmare.

M: Yes: it's known as a volume control.

Was it the engineer's problem? The mastering, or the studio?

T: The studio …

It was the studio, just didn't have the capability?

T: … and our equipment …

C: And our gear, we had the worst gear, I played on the worst drums, like boxes …

DD: Yeah, you're right: when we recorded earlier, we were using the studio's gear, and this time we had to bring our own.

T: Inexperience. Accusonic had studio equipment. We recorded there: "Oh, it's great. Let's just go to another studio, let's take our equipment: it'll be great." It was not.

DD: It was our own fault: if we knew what we were looking for, we probably could have communicated it better to the people twiddling the knobs. We had no clue, we just wanted to get it on tape.

C: We did have a producer.

T: And also, we were strapped for cash: I think that was an important consideration as well.

C: I think we were there two days …

P: I think we were there half an afternoon.

T: Yeah, I think so. But, of course, when you record these things, no one's going to ask you about it twenty-five years later. (*Awkward pause. Laughter.*)

DD: Yeah, I thought that vinyl would have disappeared. Literally.

I read a description on a blog recently that described the record as "thin and powerless to a degree that the songs lurking somewhere deep within the grooves are simply neutered by the production."

DD: That's pretty apt.

M: Well, I would go further: I didn't like some of the songs all that much.

Well, I tend to disagree: I think that there were some good songs on that record.

M: Some.

… there were a lot of good songs on there. I was wondering if there was ever a hope that you would go back and re-record material from that record? (*silence*) **With good production. Don't give me the cock-eye.**

C: I think we'd moved on musically.

P: Yeah.

DD: Run the tape through an E.Q.

T: Correct me if I'm wrong: I'm under the impression that – after going out and playing, not very much, but maybe three shows a week for nine weeks, in the States – we probably didn't want to hear hardcore songs anymore because we would play with two or three somewhat generic hardcore bands every night, so there probably was not a lot of enthusiasm for re-recording those songs.

But you probably would have been best to have done it after the tour.

T: We were certainly better …

M: Yeah, way better …

Yeah, because you were practicing … you would have been playing almost every night.

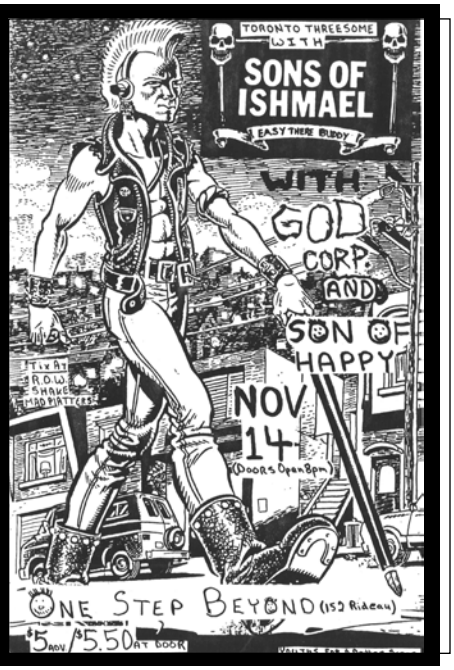
M (*sarcastically*): We were fuckin' fast.

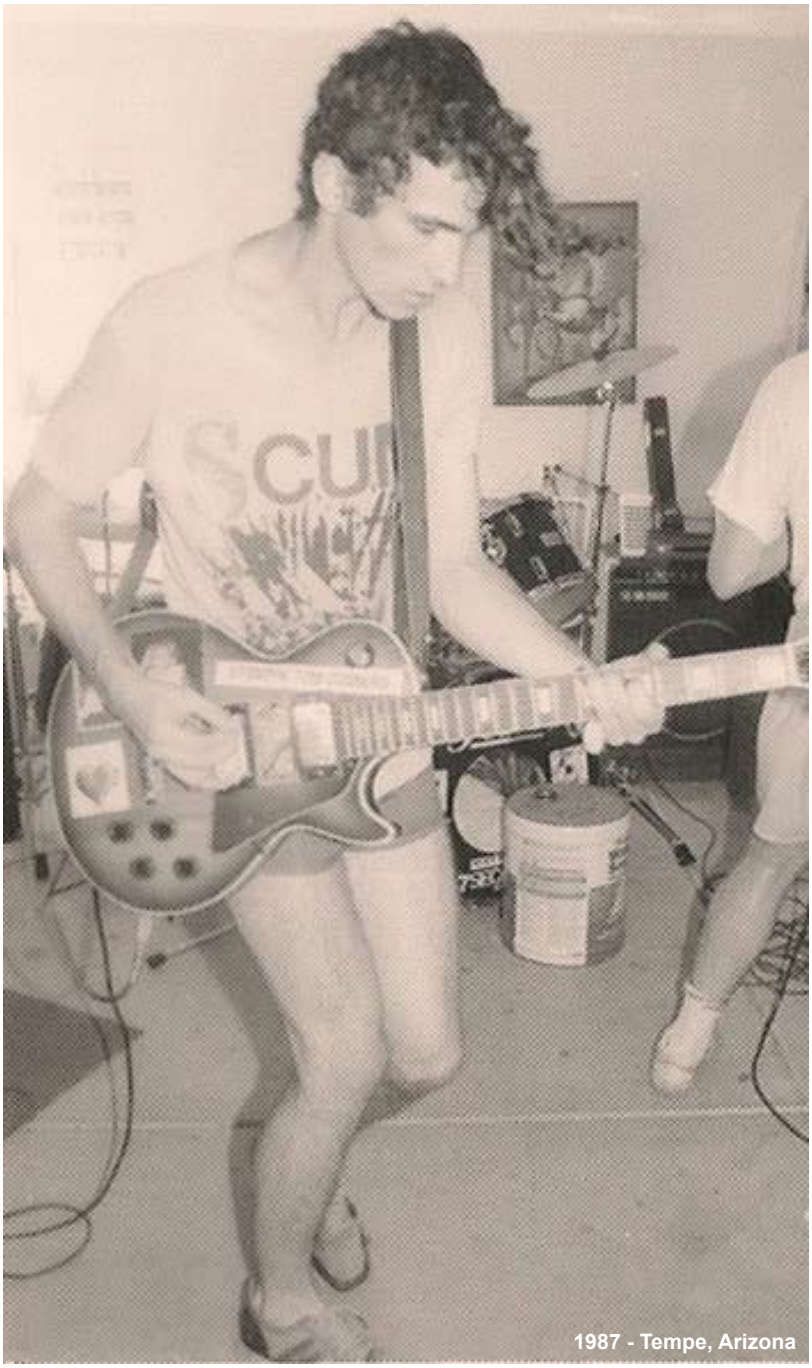
Well, I do remember you guys coming back and going "Holy shit, these guys are so tight now."

M: Yeah, well, that's another lesson to learn: do








1987 - Tempe, Arizona

your recording *after* you tour because you play the same songs every night, or, you play the songs once or twice a week for a few weeks, and you get better.

C: And we did that.

DD: They evolved. As did we. But I think that it's important to note, even though that album is dreadful, we still got a better rating in *Keranng!* than the latest CELTIC FROST album.

Is that right?

DD: Yeah: they got zero, we got one.

You got reviewed in *Keranng!*?

T: It was also released in England, so the English label obviously sent it. I think it was our best-distributed record.

It wasn't Ditch Dog sending a copy?

T: It was by far our best-distributed record.

That was maybe not a good thing.

C: Nope.

DD: Not that one …

T: The hardcore gods were punishing us.

You did a cover of "Stairway to Heaven" on that record. Why did you choose this cover? I thought it was an interesting cover to pick. I remember "Stairway to Heaven" being the slow dance at the end of the school dance.

DD: I think in those years, LED ZEPPELIN was the ultimate in bloated rock excess. That was one of the first major supergroups with their own jet and the craziness, and not to say that – hey, I love Zeppelin – …

M: So do I.

DD: … but I mean we were definitely there to mock the bloated rock excess that they'd come to be the personification of.

T: It also helped that Glenn could play the introduction. Did you double-track it, Paul?

P: I tried to play it later.

I understand that Paul Morris played "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" really fast instead of playing the actual riffs. You admitted to me this. Do you remember this?

P: No.

Do you remember what you played on that recording?

P: Is this on the recording or on the live thing?

On the recording, you said, "I just play 'Chitty Chitty Bang Bang' really fast."

P: I don't remember. I'll have to go back …

It's just that Ditch Dog was able to play the opening riff.

P: Oh, yeah, that's probably …

M: So, now I'm gonna have to go home and listen to it.

Yeah, totally: slow it down. It also wouldn't be the first time that you reappropriated a song for your material. There's a song called "Ducks Unlimited," where you use the song "little




1986 - Guelph University, Peace Bash

white ducks, swimming on the water." Can you tell us about that song?

P: Yeah, that was one I wrote when I was in DISORDERLY FASHION back in the small town I lived in, and there was a lot of duck hunters around, so I just wrote the song.

That was a group that was there, too, a hunting group under the guise of a conservation group?

P: Oh, yeah, yeah, 'cause you noticed all the hunters – Ducks Unlimited was supposed to be a conservation group, but all the hunters, the duck hunters had stickers on the back of their trucks, 'cause they wanted more ducks to kill, I guess – so that was where I got the title from, and the little duck interlude in the middle was what I learned from a Burl Ives seven inch that I had, a children's record, "The Little White Duck."

I listened to that when I was a kid, so that was how I knew the song, and when I first heard it live, I was like, "Wow! From my childhood." I thought it was great because it was like punk-Ives.

C: One of our influences.

T: Well, Burl Ives is pretty punk. He has an entire LP of bawdy songs.

There's a song called "Elvis Incorporated" that borrows Elvis riffs. What's "Elvis Incorporated" about?

C: What we said about LED ZEPPELIN.

The same thing?

T: Yes.

DD: Bloated rock excess: died on the toilet eatin' fried chicken.

He was pretty bloated at that point.

P: As Glenn pointed out earlier, that was one of the ones that was from ANGRY THALIDOMIDE BABIES days that carried over into SONS OF ISHMAEL.

You did a short weekend tour to Ohio on March 20 and 21st of 1987. The first date was in Kent, Ohio. Did you decide to cover "Ohio" because of the show in Kent?

DD: No, that song had been in the repertoire long before that.

T: Kenny and I, even though we were into abrasive and scabrous punk rock, still, to a certain extent, liked Bob Dylan and Neil Young, so we were thinking maybe we could cover one of their songs, and we tried to cover "Highway 61" by Bob Dylan, which didn't really sound very good when we sped it up, but "Ohio" seemed to work well, and … Glenn, did you figure that one out? Or did Andrew?

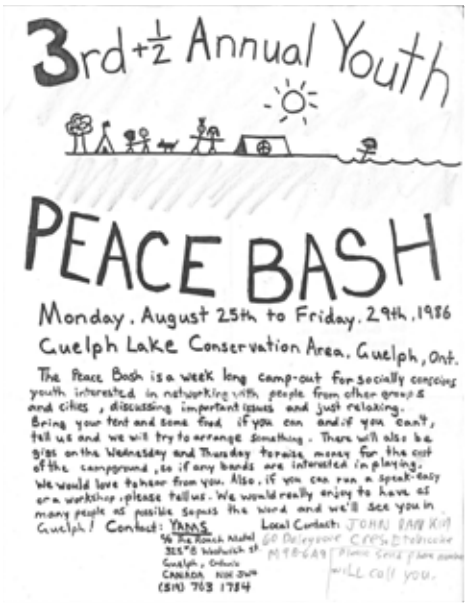
DD: Andrew did. You guys already had it in the repertoire. I mean, as a cover song it still has a great impact, there's a great meaning to that song.

Did the song take on some significant meaning after playing Kent?

DD: Yeah, I remember Danny walking us around the Kent State University grounds and actually showing us where the bullet holes were in the statues and all that, and it made it a heck of a lot more real than just a CSNY tune, that's for sure.

Did you play that song in Kent?

DD: Twice.



And did you remember how it was received?

DD: I remember things being very well received. It was crazy, it was a living-room party then, wasn't it?

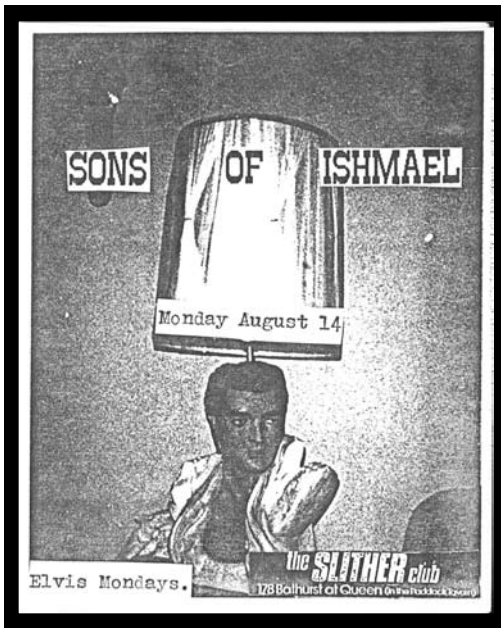
C: Yep.

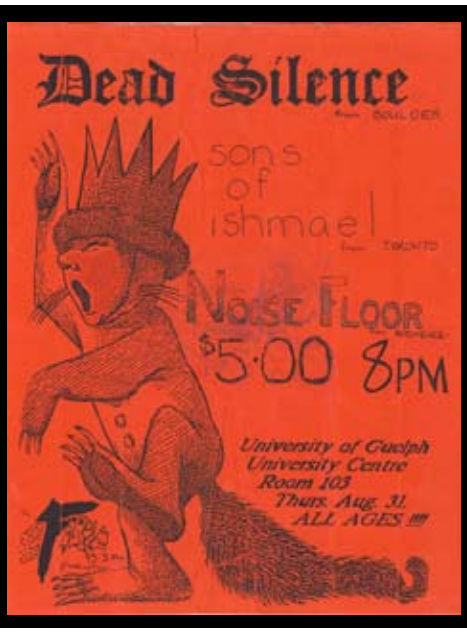
At the Happy Hippy House.

DD: Yeah, it was crazy fun.

That was where the floor almost collapsed. I was taken downstairs while you guys were playing, and the floor was significantly sagging. It's amazing that the floor didn't collapse.

DD: We had to borrow all the gear there because we knew we wouldn't be able to get across the border if we were hauling our equipment, so we









showed up with nothing.

But there was a lot of people there.

DD: Yeah, it was great.

M: Was that the same weekend, Stephe, that you were driving our van, without a license, and drunk?

I think you're thinking of Kevin Parks … but he was in no condition to drive.

P: But the cops pulled us over while you were driving, to give you a speeding ticket.

C: That's right, on the way back from Cincinnati.

No, because I don't think I was driving.

M: I have pictures: dude, you were totally driving.

I might have been driving, but I didn't get the ticket. I do remember getting pulled over.

C: I think Danny was driving.

Danny was. I think you're right.

P: I remember he asked for a Visa to pay the fine.

DD: Is that when we went to Kentucky?

M: Oh yeah, we had *tonnes* of credit cards.

Yeah, and I think that the place you guys played, the Jockey Club, had notoriety for Jimi Hendrix playing there. Everyone told us that.

DD: And, as we said, his bowel movement was still residing in the toilet bowl in that washroom.

It sure looked like it.

DD: There was a horrible stench in there, man.

C: That's the show we had to pay, we had to rent equipment from ACTIVE INGREDIENTS.

M: Yeah, way to go, Paul.

E: And I think only twenty people showed up because DOA had played the week before and stolen your thunder. That was at least the excuse we were given.

T: Happily, the venue was so big that you couldn't notice those twenty people.

It was like a practice. A long-distance one.

DD: Yeah, it was really like a warm-up for the tour.

P: Practicing to play in front of twenty people?

DD: Yeah, like Scary in Detroit?

M: We played to a total of seven people, and I don't think they were charged to get in, just 'cause there didn't seem to be any point.

Were there lots of shows like that on that first U.S. tour?

C: A few …

DD: I think the MEATMEN really eff'd us over: every time we'd roll into town, the club we were supposed to play at had been shut down by the police because of them. We lost probably half of our dates to them, did we not?

P: I don't remember that.

T: No one but Glenn does.

DD: Them and their "War of the Superbikes" … I'll get them.

Was this the tour that you also befriended YOUTH OF TODAY?

P: Uh, yeah.

DD: And GOVERNMENT ISSUE.

C: We hung out with them at the *Maximum Rock'n'Roll* house in San Francisco. They got up every morning to go jogging and play touch football.

T: They did drink a lot of milk.

Is that right?

T: Yeah.

So it wasn't just a joke …

T: It was to me.

DD: They were good guys; we had fun there.

C: I stole their Nerf football.

T: They were very nice, but they …

DD: … they were really positive.

C: And then Mike Judge went to form JUDGE after that. He was so pissed off at them, too.

For not being hard enough?

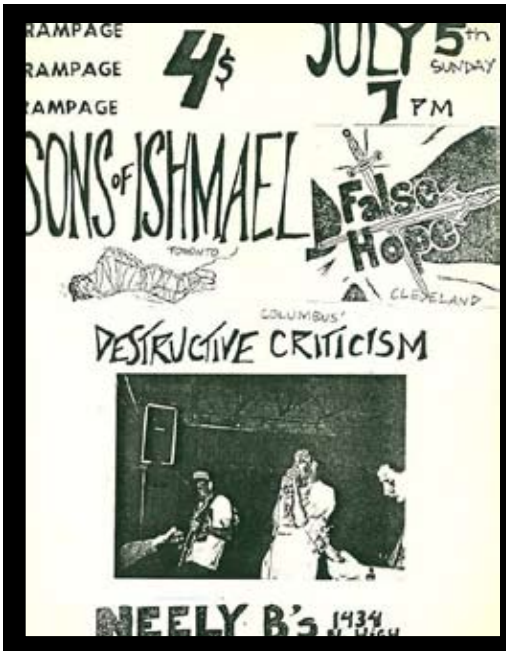
C: Yeah, they weren't militant enough.

T: They were positive except when they found out that their t-shirts were going to be 50/50.

I do remember you saying something about that.

T: They had a bee in their bonnet about that.

You're talking about the cotton-polyester content of the shirts?







T: Yes.

So, what was upsetting about that? They didn't like the mix? They wanted 100% cotton?

DD: Yeah, they were a bunch of Aryan purists when it came to shirts.

T: Polyester, Stephe, it retains sweat – they're always thinking about perspiration …

M: … because they're very athletic.

DD (*laughing*): If they got drunk once in a while, they would have thought about something more important.

M: See, if you work out as much as they do, you don't want to wear a t-shirt.

DD: Well, we should've been working out, we were abstaining from sex as well at that time, weren't we?

M: Yeah.

DD: Not by choice.

M: That's one way of putting it, yeah.

I remember going to see a GORILLA BISCUITS show at the Apocalypse Club, where they either tried to do a SONS OF ISHMAEL cover or did a sort of shout out to SONS OF ISHMAEL because I think Walter was in that line-up of YOUTH OF TODAY, and, anyway, he tried to recognize SONS OF ISHMAEL on stage. They were still remembering, with fondness, SONS OF ISHMAEL.

T: Walter Schreifels was a beacon of light in that band because he was the least athletic. He was picked on for being introverted, and he also slept a lot, so I felt a personal connection to him.

M: And he is still playing. He's playing in the New York City area. I think it might be kind of jazzy? I'm not sure.

Tell us about the song "Does it Matter?" What is that song about? Do you remember it? "Does it really matter how fast we play? Do you really care about what we have to say?"

M: He has to remind us of the lyrics.

Well, it's been a while.

M: A few decades.

Did the song have an inspiration? Did it come from something?



T: That would have been written around the time of the CRUCIFUCKS / DAYGLO ABORTIONS show at the Bridge in May, 1986, a show that was a real revelation to me about punk-rock hickitude. The CRUCIFUCKS were playing songs off of their great and just-released *Wisconsin* LP, and Doc Dart's between-song banter was both provocative and hilarious. Not many people tolerated them (let alone loved them, as I did). In short order, they cleared the room of a few hundred people who an hour before had been eating up (what seemed to me at the time to be) the rock clichés of the DAYGLO ABORTIONS. If people weren't lighting their lighters in Maple Leaf Gardens fashion to the DAYGLOS, they were doing everything but that to express their love. There's no disputing taste, to be sure, but I couldn't figure out why people were so threatened by a non-descript, thirty-something fella with a receding hairline and an Ozzy Osbourne tour shirt telling them that he was God.

DD: As I recall, we were getting a lot of people coming out to the shows that were just loving us because we were fast, and they had no effing clue what we were trying to talk about, and that launched that whole bunch of joke bands that we were gonna do, like Trucker's Penis … Mejta taż-żgħażagħ … everything was going to be in Finnish …

M: Maltese, actually.

DD: … and as fast as possible. And we knew we could sell!

M: Just because it was fast.

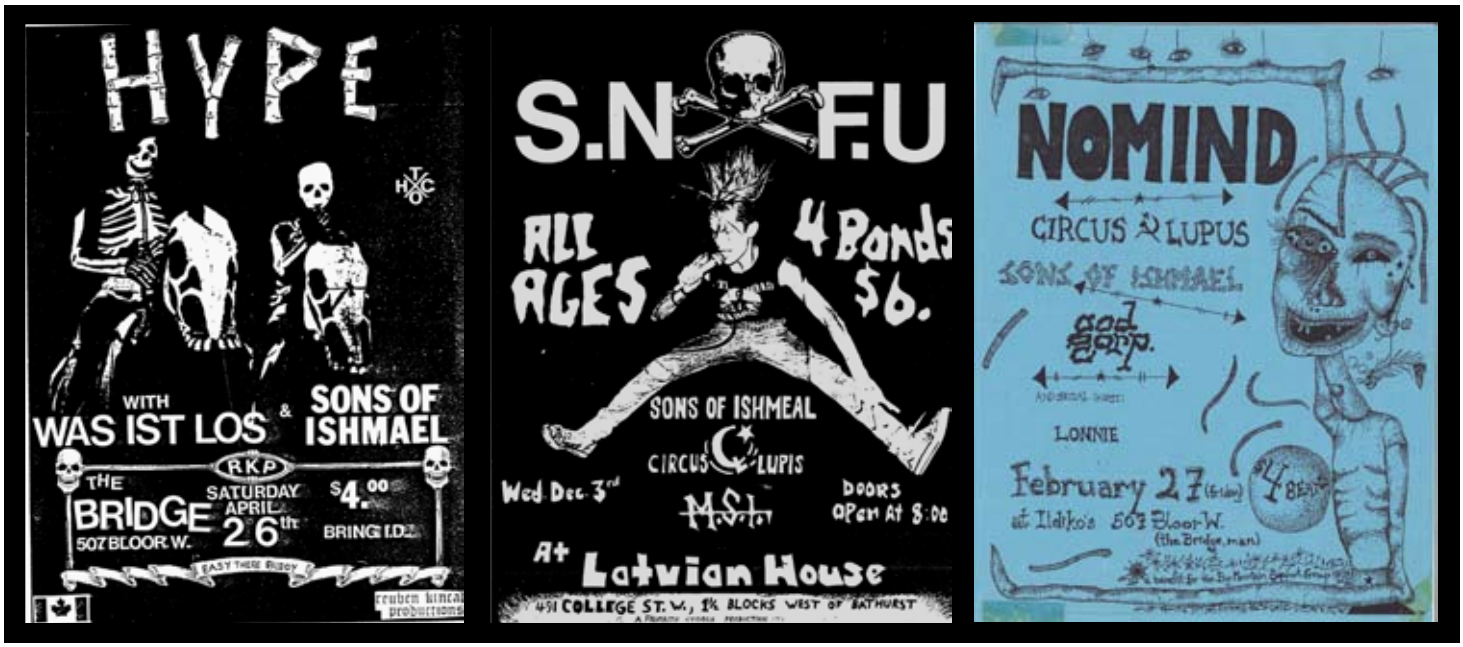
DD: Yeah!

Where does the idea of "Man and His Penis Sceptre" come from? This seems to be a song that people remember. I've seen it often mentioned in blogs and things like that. (*silence*) **Do you remember?**

DD: Male-centric society.

T: Yes: alpha-males.

DD: If that's a word for it. Is that a word?



Yep. I mean, we get it.

M: Was this written after the U.S. tour?

P: No, ‘cause it was on the record.

M: O.K. I was thinking there might be a relationship between being in the van with the rest of the band for two months and writing that song.

DD: No, that probably wouldn’t have been as thoughtful. It would have been, like, “locked up with a bunch of dicks.”

T: I don’t know if I ever harboured an illusion about what it would be like to live in a city and be part of a punk-rock scene. You know, growing up in Meaford, one fantasizes in a number of ways, but I realized that, in fact, there were hicks here, too, and that there were hicks in the punk-rock scene, and punk-rock hicks were cretinous, alpha-male types, so I thought that these people were not, as I am, sensitive or interesting (*laughter*), and I thought that there was no difference between what I was seeing from some people at punk-rock shows and the most odious behaviour that I’d seen at field parties in the town where I grew up, so that’s probably what got me thinking about such things.

DD: Speaking of performances at field parties, Tim, I know you packed in a couple yourself.

T: Well, I was beyond at that point …

DD: Scott Hunter’s top hat will never be the same. (*Silence*)

M: Explain.

What do you mean? Whose top hat won’t be the same?

DD: That was one of our last field parties in high school, when you got locked in Ken McLeod’s car because you were so hammered, and we didn’t want you to hurt yourself.

T: This is the end of Grade Ten we’re talking about.

DD: But it’s just a wonderful moment, remembering how you couldn’t find the lock in time to vomit, and then you threw up in Scott Hunter’s top hat, and he was so proud of it.

T: And I said I wasn’t going to bring up the time in Rapid City where you vomited on our host’s floor and woke up to the cat eating your vomit.

DD (*laughing*): Actually, I vomited on the cat, it just happened that some of it hit the floor. Yeah … hey, I’ll bring it up. I did there, too. Or



1991 - AK47, Dűsseldorf

Wisconsin, Green Bay, where the promoter fed me liquor, I wiped out the drums and the bass amp.

M: Kenosha, Glenn.

DD: Oh. That was Kenosha? That’s right.

In 1989, you would go on to release an e.p. called *Sing! Generic Crap*. Where did this get recorded?

C: Reaction Studios, King and Strachan area, behind a taxi garage and a propane-refuelling station.

DD: That studio was run by the guys in GLUELEG or something, wasn’t it?

P: I don’t remember.

C: It was the nicest studio we’d really ever been in, up to that time.

And I remember the record cover looking like an old BAY CITY ROLLERS record that you had cut and pasted your faces on: was that accurate?

C: I collect BAY CITY ROLLERS records: I just think they’re the stupidest covers I’ve ever seen, and they were so ridiculous …

They were a funny, gimmick band.

C: … they were serious about it …

T: The similarities are obvious.

M: A gimmick band.

C: So we picked a cover …

What was the idea with the cover? To make fun of the BAY CITY ROLLERS?

DD: There are so many similarities between them and us: the same rise, the prominence, the same background, I was a Scottish bagpiper …

T: The title came from a show in Guelph in which a heckler said that we were playing generic crap.

So you embraced it, and reappropriated it?

T: Indeed.

C: And, if you look at that cover closely, there’s like little digital tricks that we employed: some people have more than five fingers, and there’s some extra hair …

P: It’s just like “Find Waldo.”

C: It was a guy who lived in my building who was a graphic designer, so he scanned it and took our pictures and grafted our pictures … the first time I ever really saw PhotoShop being used …

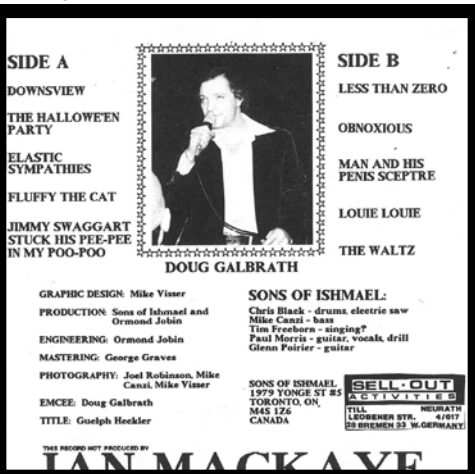
Yeah, I don’t think it was really much used that way. And the back cover had a picture of Doug Galbraith. Who was Doug Galbraith?

M: Come on, Stephe: you know.

DD: A Toronto punk icon.

This is not for my benefit.





Sell-Out Activities, 1989

SONS OF ISHMAEL - "Sing Generic Crap" EP

This band is so good it's scary. One of the most original hardcore acts around. Some of the best lyrics I've read in ages. Slow and fast and in-between, these folks have undeniably mastered the art of writing catchy songs with cleverly sarcastic lyrics, covering serious issues the whole time. Very much within the same vein as TH'INBRED. Highly recommended. (CD)
(1979 Yonge St #5, Toronto, Ont. M4S 1Z6, CANADA)

Maximumrocknroll, #77



M: Doug Galbraith was I think sort of the M.C. at a club that we played at frequently.
He was, sort of, the boyfriend of …
M: … of the owner: her name was Ildiko, and the club was called Ildiko's originally, and then became The Bridge …
P: Actually, it was called The Starwood, and then became The Bridge, and then became Ildiko's.
M: The sign of a quality bar. So, Doug would introduce the punk-rock bands, and he had a very distinctive way of doing so …
DD: In a purple, satin jacket.
C: He had nice shoes, and …
P: … and flares …
C: Flared pants …
T: He had a lot of flair, for sure.
M: He was a Las Vegas style entertainer, I'd say.
C: "Come up and get some snacks, after the show."
M: "Alright!"
And didn't he make it onto one of your recordings?
M: He's on that record, somewhere.
DD: Yeah, he's at the end of that.
P: He's at both the end and the beginning, isn't he? I think it was a tape that Mike had recorded of who knows what band, GANG GREEN, that's what it was, I think, maybe?
No, it was SONS OF ISHMAEL.
P: And we just spliced that onto the studio, so it sounds like the first song is actually live, but it's really just a live tape.
DD: Ah, studio trickery.
All kinds of cut-and-paste going on on this record.
C: We were the Beatles of hardcore.
M: That was our *Sergeant Pepper's*.
DD: Yeah, we were experimenting with acid and shamanism.
Mike, I think you wrote a song called "Downsview". Can you tell us about that song, what's it about?
M: I was living in Downsview at the time, going to York University, and I could just smell in the air every now and then something that I couldn't identify the origins of, but I knew it probably wasn't very healthy, and I thought it smelled like Kraft Dinner, and I still to this day don't know what the origin of that smell was.
I do.
M: What is it, Stephe?
It's a recycling plant.
M: Get out.
I used to ride by it every day when I was working at the newspaper there.
DD: I didn't know that they recycled Kraft Dinner.
C: Mystery solved, after all these years.
M: All right, so I rescind that: that song is rescinded.
DD: Well, that takes all the mystery out of that: thanks, Stephe.
E: I'm sorry.
M: Way to go.
Well, that's why Downsview smells like Kraft Dinner.
M: O.K. Cool.
"Hallowe'en Party" is a song near and dear to my heart. Tell us about that song. What was the inspiration for that song?
C: Lunkheads.
M: You were there.
T: It's a narrative about a party that we were asked to play the night after …
That I put on.
T: Were you responsible?
Yes, I was.
T: O.K., well …
DD: That changes the answer.
T: It does not.
No, I hope it doesn't. It was a pretty crazy night.
T: It was a weekend of aborted shows: we were supposed to play with AGNOSTIC FRONT in Buffalo the night before – it never happened – the next night, we were asked to play at … it turned into a house-wrecking party, but it started off as a kind of "Pete's parents are moving, so maybe we can have a show at their house" party?
C: The house was being demolished, wasn't it?
It was always a house-wrecking party, and then, that day, they found out that the house was to be used as the showroom for the sales office where they were selling the houses, so all of a sudden it was a plea to not wreck the house.
M: Too late.
C: And how did that go?
But the story had already been sent out to lots of high schools in North York: there were about two-thousand kids there, I think.
C: They came to see us, but stayed for the fun.
You guys didn't even get to load in your





1987 - Slither Club, Toronto

equipment, did you?

DD: I don't think we wanted to. When we showed up, wasn't there stuff going through the window?

T: I just remember testosterone-addled men destroying the house: they were not high-school students. Reprobates.

I think when you guys showed up there was a washing machine that went through a wall, like one of those old, rolling-pin ones, and someone had knocked it through a wall. And I think you guys saw it because you were telling me about it, and you were saying, "We're not going in there."

M: That's stupid. We should have played.

T: I preferred to stand in the street and pass judgment.

It was probably a good idea, 'cause the police showed up shortly soon after, right? Do you remember any other details about the song? Or the story?

T: Merely a narrative: Gordon Lightfoot has his "Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald," we have our "Hallowe'en Party."

What was the song "Louie Louie" about? It wasn't really a cover of that song, was it?

C: No.

M: Like a lot of the songs we're talking about so far, it was about lunkheadedness. So, it was getting increasingly difficult to go to a hardcore show and just watch the band because there were people dancing in a way that, I felt …

Made it impossible to watch the show.

DD: They were out there … that was their Friday night: they wanted to bust somebody up in the pit.

M: Right, which is something that really sort of put me off hardcore, one of the many things …

C: Even if you were standing adjacent to the pit, you would be dragged in, you would be sucked into this thing and get beat down.

M: Yeah, I wanted to get away from people like that, there were people like that in high school, jocks in high school I wanted to get away from, so, all of a sudden, rubbing elbows with them …

I think even in university, you were right beside what was known as the jock college.

M: Oh, the "Stongoloids."

Yeah, so you also had reminders outside, and you were thinking …

M: A little bit, yeah.

… the association was too similar.

M: And I just couldn't … and the whole … I started using the word "Louie" to mean short for "loser." That's it.

Wasn't also "Louie" a favourite heckle of people, trying to get people to play that cover?

M: Probably, yeah.

Maybe did that represent the inspiration?

M: That's a good way … yeah.

Partially?

M: Sure.

O.K. One of the first reports I'd ever heard before I'd actually seen the band was from Ken Huff, who was talking about how …

M: Interesting.

… Tim threw himself against one of those ranch-style fences at the old DMZ. Do you recall this? I think you had lost your glasses and just …

T: It's possible. I never wore them when we played because I didn't want …

Didn't want to hurt them.

T: Yes, and I also didn't want to see actually who or what was out there.

I think this might have been a show you might have played with AOD. Do you recall what AOD was like and what that show was like?

T: They were great. After we saw them, we decided that we had to get two guitar players. We only had one. We felt deficient.

So, in some way, they were an inspiration, I guess.




Photo by Christoph, *OX Magazine*

T: Yeah. I'd never heard them. I think it was the first time I'd heard them, and was really …

They had a thick guitar sound.

T: Yeah: they were great.

And what was it like to play the DMZ, 'cause it was, like, a punk-run club back then.

T: It was fine. Great. No problem.

DD: I found it intimidating. It was one of my first shows. We weren't even old enough to be in the bar, let alone these cro-magnons walking around that owned the joint. BFG scared the hell out of all of us back then.

Sure. But wouldn't it have been neat also that it was a punk-run club?

T: It had a lot of character.

DD: The intimidation ended after the first time I played there. It was fun, it was cool. But, definitely, going in there, small kids from Meaford, here's the first show I'm gonna play at this joint. Holy crap!

… 'cause there was lots of graffiti all over the place, and there was lots of kids with mohawks.

DD: And the crowd was really into the other stuff going on … that was the 76% UNCERTAIN show that I played with you guys at, and it was intense. Just, I was up for it, definitely, but I was a little intimidated going in.

M: I was intimidated before I went to my first punk show, too; it was DOA in Windsor, and I had no idea what to expect. I was really afraid for my safety, and there was no cause for that.

I felt the same, too. And then you get there, and then you realize that it's fine.

M: People might look odd, but they're generally O.K.

I think the DMZ closed shortly after: did you play other places? What were some of the other places that you would play a lot in Toronto?

C: The Bridge, every weekend.

P: There was a gap from the early shows at the DMZ and Larry's Hideaway …

DD: There was the Center for Nuclear Disarmament, remember that upstairs place beside the El Mo or somethin'?

DD: That was good. The Silver Dollar.

C: The Quoc Te, we played.

You guys played the Quoc Te? Who did you play with there?

C: We have the flyer.

DD: The Siboney, or whatever it was.

I remember a show at the Siboney, I think you might have played with SNFU there.

P: So the flyer says; I don't remember the show. We were talking about that this morning, but we couldn't remember the show.

DD: I remember the Latvian House on College.

That was a short-lived place that only had a couple of shows. You played with SNFU there.

P: And YOUTH BRIGADE – the BRIGADE – played there shortly thereafter; I don't think there was much there after.

There were just those two shows, really.

M: How about the Slither Club and the Soup, did we play there?

T: Yeah, we played there a few times.

C: We have a video of that.

T: The place I liked the best was the Rivoli. Not a punk club, but the room was very good …

C: It has a nice-sized room …

… a good stage …

P: We played there with HOLE.

M: Yeah, they opened for us. (*snickers*)

T: We played there with SNFU, I think, in '89. Glenn, maybe, that was your last show with us … at the Rivoli with SNFU in '89?

DD: I think my last show was at the Silver Dollar.

T: In '88?

DD: No, no, you're right: I do remember that. Yeah, I do remember that, with SNFU. I do remember. Yes, me playing my guitar with the hot pink pickups. What the hell was I thinking in the '80s?

M: Has there been a change? (*laughter*)









1991 - AK47, Dűsseldorf

There was a show for you, a flyer that I saw, with the FALSE PROPHETS, and Paul, you were remarking to me that you don't remember them playing. Do you guys remember playing that show?

T: We played with the FALSE PROPHETS and A.P.P.L.E. in Stamford, Connecticut.

M: And that was a good show.

In the States …

T: Yeah. But not in Toronto.

They maybe didn't make it up here.

M: That's not hard to believe.

DD: Chris has a soundboard tape of that somewhere … the Anthrax. That was pretty cool.

T: I saw them in Toronto, but we certainly didn't play with them.

P: Yeah, I couldn't remember that show, either.

Do you remember the Peace Bash in Guelph? (*Embarrassed laughter*)

DD: The acoustic set?

P: We've forgotten it, I think.

That was in a room in Guelph University where …

M: Was that the one where you drew penises on your brother's legs when he was passed out?

Yeah, that's the one. That's right.

M: Yeah, that was a good show.



Yeah, memorable, I guess, for the N U N F U C K E R S' p e r f o r m a n c e. Partially.

P: Yeah, what happened there was we were booked to play, we couldn't play for whatever reason, so we just figured, "well, we'll show up anyway, and we'll do an acoustic set."

DD: Weren't we missing somebody?

T: We were missing a lot.

E: That's right: you guys did do an acoustic set.

P: We did an acoustic set …

T: … Glenn played a twelve-string …

P: … and our only practice was in the bathroom ten minutes beforehand or something. It was a disaster.

DD: We tried to pull them out in the van, but there wasn't enough room for the guitars.

P: Oh yeah?

M: You were good sports.

P: Anyway, it wasn't good.

T [to M]: You played with us after you saw us, so …

DD: Someone saw it and it set off that whole fury of unplugged concerts that MTV did.

E: There was, on a blog about ABC-No Rio, there was a quote that said, from somebody, I think it was Mike Bullshit, from GO!, Mikey Bullshit …

P: Great name.

E: … who wrote, "I remember when SONS OF ISHMAEL from Canada played ABC. They had been a band for, what, ten or twelve years at that point, but the first time they came down to ABC they were like, 'Oh my God, this is incredible'. They got paid more money than they'd ever gotten paid, they played to almost more people than they'd ever played to; that was just like every week for us here." Do you remember playing ABC-No Rio? Who did you play with, and when approximately was it?

T: We opened for RORSCHACH and BORN AGAINST on their return from U.S. tour, so that would have been in 1990. Summer of '90 or '91?

M: Right before we went to Europe.

P: It was also at the time when the Russian Curtain came down.









The Iron Curtain?

P: That very morning. It was on the news that morning, and then we headed there.

T: I think, about the quote, that we were certainly not a band for ten or twelve years, and we had played at places where there were *some* people, but I remember thinking that it was extremely generous of these bands that everyone had come to see and were just coming back from tour and could have used the money, I think they …

They were probably broke.

T: … yeah, they were probably broke, but they gave us a lot of money, more, I think, than we were probably expecting.

C: I think we were excited, too, to be playing in New York City because we'd been banned from CBGBs prior.

You'd been banned from there? How come?

C: Well, pick it up, Tim, I think we were invited to come down, but there was a drummer situation before I was in the band …

T: Yep: twice, Geoff Tomlinson, who was going to release *Hayseed Hardcore*, or re-release it, on his *Irate Faction* label, set up shows with us at CBGBs, their Sunday matinee shows, and both times he cancelled, and he said he had a very irate letter from Hilly Kristal, who'd bought …

C: I have the letter from Hilly, saying, "Your recording session has been booked. Please bring your gear and put fresh strings on your guitars." So it was the fake letter we needed to get across the border.

T: So, everything was ready to go …

Those were the letters that would allow you to get across the border.

T: In theory, in theory. Of course, we were naïve …

P: You wouldn't be permitted to play, but we pretended that we were recording down there.

T: We did make the arrangements to play legally, it was nothing …

P: Winking.

Yes, winking. That's not something in your eye, is it?

T: No, it's the sun, actually. He sent Geoff an irate letter saying "This band will never play here."

C: So in '87, when we were really booking a tour and knew we were going, he wouldn't book us.

M: And look what happened to them. It's closed down now.

P: I don't remember there being a lot of people there, though, because it was such a small place. It wasn't a very big place; it was just like a small little basement. I wouldn't have thought it was more people than normal.

C: It was a collective. There was a café area, it was like a community center kind of thing, more than just a club.

M: It was like some of the gigs were in Europe, in that people would be selling records there. It felt really good; it had a good vibe.

C: There were more people hanging out in the street most of the time than actually going inside to this dank basement with pipes two feet over your head and dripping condensation over your head while bands were playing.

M: Some of them were dripping condescension.

P: That was you.

C: We have the video of it, too.

P: It should be renamed "ABC-No-Toilet-Paper." (*Silence*) The bathroom was really bad.

M: It could be part of a chain.

DD: ABC-No-TP.

That would work. There was a DEAD SILENCE show that took place on June 10, 1988 that said this was the last Toronto show ever. How come that was the last Toronto show?

C: At the Silver Dollar?

Yes.

M: Well, we were heavily influenced at that time by the WHO.







And their continuous reunion shows?
M: That's correct.
So, was it really that, or …?
M: I have no idea.
P: It was probably a joke.
I think the WHO are playing the Super Bowl today.
M: Both of them?
DD: Only because we turned it down.
M: Tim, was there a story there?
T: I quit the band, and that was our last show. That was supposed to be our last show.
But you would go on to play a show a couple of weeks later.
T: Uhh, no.
M: That was a pun.
P: What?
M: I don't know.
T: We got back together in '89, so that was our last show in 1988, and we thought that was the last show, period.
O.K., and then you got back together.
T: We did.
How come you would break up then?
T: I moved to Peterborough to go to school. York University didn't yet have its mall, so I needed to go somewhere else, where I could go to school and shop immediately afterwards.
I didn't realize Peterborough had that.
P: … Trent being in the middle of nowhere.
T: What you don't know about Peterborough …
Oatmeal.
T: Indeed.
P: Captain Crunch.
M: Birkenstocks.
P: They had the Quaker Oat factory downtown, and on some days they made Quaker Oats, and on some days they made Captain Crunch.
T (adapting the first line of "Downsview"): "The air should always smell like that."
M: Mmmm.
We went down there to play a show, and we had time to kill, so I went to the Quaker Oat factory, and was peering in at what looked like a lot of sawdust, and I was wondering if they were putting that in the cereal.
M: The answer is yes, Stephe.
T: That's fine. They should keep doing it: it's delicious.
Did you ever play Canada at all, do a Canadian tour?
C: Tried to. We did a big U.S. tour in '87 and we were down there for sixty days or so. Sixty-four days, and all through the tour we were anticipating getting back into civilization into Canada, and …
M: And when we did cross that border into B.C., I felt a wave of relief.







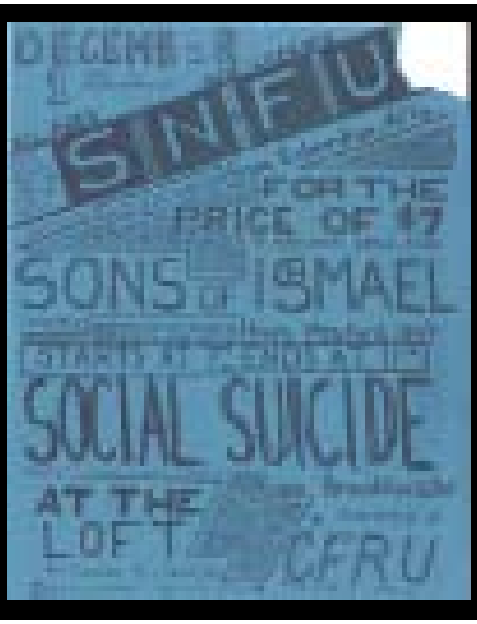
1987 - The Bridge, Toronto

C: … 'cause that week we stayed at the DEATH SENTENCE house, which was civilization …
DD: Barely.
C: … barely …
Nonetheless.
C: … but we had no shows.
T: Paul, you booked the Canadian wing of the tour.
P: Yeah, I didn't do a very good job of it, so ...
M: Yes you did …
T: It was a trying situation.
C: We went to a DAYGLOS show, they played in Vancouver, I think we went to that show.
You didn't get to play it.
P: I tried like a devil to get us a show in Vancouver, but no dice.
C: And then we drove on to Calgary, where we had a really big show there with SNFU at McEwen Hall, we got to play that, and we invited the guys in SNFU to come up to Edmonton – where they lived, obviously – to see our show at the pizzeria the next night, and they said, "Oh, yeah, we'll be there." So the next night in Edmonton, there was like five people there, and they were mostly friends of the metal band …
DD: DISCIPLES OF POWER.
C: … DISCIPLES OF POWER …
DD: I remember I stayed up all night with them, doing hooch.
P: Moonshine?
C: … the show was delayed because they wouldn't go on without their drum riser, so we had to make a special trip back to their rehearsal room to pick up the drum riser and bring it back to this tiny bullshit bar so they could set up their double-bass drum set. So that was a disappointing show, and then …



T: It was fine and nice, but we were supposed to … there was some talk about playing a show in Regina, and we thought …
Which would have broken up the prairies a little bit.
T: … "This is a house party – we're just going to blow it off, we've heard this story before: 'We've got this party, you're going to play …'"; so, I think, maybe three weeks later, we saw the ASEXUALS, who had just come from there and said, "Heard you blew off a really big house party in Regina." And I said, "Typical, yes."
C: It's true, too, because I met the promoter when I went out on tour later with another band, and he said, "Oh: there was a couple hundred people in that house waiting for you guys."
M: We blew it off.
C: We were in Regina. It was, like, one or two in the morning …
P: At McDonald's.
C: … and we were driving through, and it was just like, "Just keep on going."
I remember Tim referring to the prairies as "Fred Flintstone's living room."
T: Well, I think I was quoting Mike. I slept through all of it, I'm sure.
Because it looks very much the same.
T: Yes, in my dreams, it was.
DD: Yeah, it was the same until we got to Winnipeg. Then we got to turn right.
I saw a flyer for a show in Port Hope, and there's some video footage online of a show …
P: There is.
… I think that was where MR. NOBODY were from, weren't they?
P: They were Cobourg, Port Hope, somewhere around there.









1987 - Slither Club, Toronto

M: Were they on that bill?
P: I think so; I think they were the only other band on the bill.
C: Was this at … or was it at that bar?
P: Walton's bar on main street in Port Hope.
Was there much of a scene there?
M: There was a bit of a scene afterwards. (*Laughter*)
T: There was a violent scene after involving an obnoxious heckler – known locally as "Poopy-Pants" – punching Chris after our set.
P: The scene in that area consisted of a few people from Cobourg, a few people from Belleville, a few people from Peterborough, and everybody would come into one center, which was usually Cobourg or Port Hope or Grafton.
C: And then just a bunch of bar locals.
T: That scene got pretty big as the '90s progressed, with HERBAL SCREAM, who became SHOTMAKER, and there were pretty big shows, actually, in Belleville, the Tweed-Belleville-Port Hope corridor.
P: At this point, we should introduce Daragh Hayes, our bass player, that started playing with us, and he was one of the guys putting on shows in Belleville, and that's how we met him and got him to join the band later.
How did Daragh come to join the band? Why did you need him? Because it sounds like you had a full line-up already.
P: So Glenn left early in the summer of '89, after we opened for SNFU at the Rivoli. We had another guitarist for a short while – Dave Walsh from NO MIND – in '89, and then Dave left, and then Mike decided to switch to guitar, so we decided to get a bass player and …
DD: He'd just been waiting for the chance.
M: I really should have taken it when it was first offered. Not that there's anything wrong with Dave. He's a very nice fella.
P: … then we had an opening on bass, so Daragh filled in.
C: He fulfilled all the requirements: he agreed to do it.
T: And he didn't mind being picked on.
Joining the scapegoat contingent.
T: And he was fairly bibulous in those days, so …
M: What do you mean, "bibulous"?
T: (*drinking motion*)
M: Oh, yeah.
He liked to drink?
DD: Now you can get pills for that.
C: He was the only … well, he wasn't the only one.
M: He was not very straight edge.
GOD CORP talked about you getting them a show in Ottawa?
P: I remember that show, but I don't remember us getting it for them. I remember because some of the guys came in the van with us.
Maybe they were talking about getting there.
T: We got there with them.
C: Was that the Tom-the-Driver van?
P: No, it was our van. 'Cause the Tom-the-Driver van was MSI and SONS OF ISHMAEL at the Dom Polski Center in Ottawa.
M: That was a magic weekend. (*laughter*)
P: They set the P.A. up in their kitchen …
Why was it a "magic" weekend?
C: My jacket was stolen at that show.
M: Well, there was a dog that wanted to hump people …
P: … and we're trying to sleep on the floor of this house, the dog is trying to hump people, and they set the p.a. up from the hall in the kitchen and played MOTORHEAD until 6 a.m.
C: No, it was MISFITS and DAYGLOS.
It sounds like a party. So you stayed up all night.
M: Not everyone enjoyed it, and I can certainly see that point of view. In retrospect.
You toured Europe a few times. When was the





first time you went to Europe?
C: Summer of 1990.
T: July-August.
And how did you get invited to go there?
C: I don't know if we were invited, but …
You set up a tour?
T: We invited ourselves.
C: … we knew we had people who were interested in seeing us there, because we'd gotten the mail. This is before the internet or e-mail, so I just remember getting up every morning and phoning places in Germany and Holland and trying to connect with people to put shows on for us and just trying to organize it. And I didn't have a fax machine, so I'd write up letters and take them downtown to a buddy of mine downtown who had a fax machine in his store, and faxing stuff over to Europe, so it came together pretty well: we got some help from some cool people, and we went over there, and it went pretty well.
How long was the tour for? How many weeks were you there?
P: Two months.
M: Nine weeks, yeah.
And do you remember which countries you played, roughly?
Everyone: Holland, Germany, Switzerland, England, Wales, Belgium …
C: Italy?
M: No, that was the second time.
T: Mostly Germany the first time.
C: Czechoslovakia?
T: No, second time.
Did you have lots of help when you were over there?
P: Yeah, we hooked up with a band from England – I don't know how – called NESSUN DORMA, and they had this huge bread truck, like a postal truck, and we crammed ten guys in there …
C: … and their girlfriends, at one point.
P: … and a tour manager, and away we went.
From England?
P: Yeah, we flew to Amsterdam and then took a bus to Bristol, England, where they were based, and started the tour from there.
T: When I watched the recent documentary *Anvil: The Story of Anvil*, I flashed back pretty hard …
M: Any particular scene?
T: Well, there was the tour manager breaking and throwing a fit, there was the scene in which they were being paid in goulash …
M: Oh yeah.
T: … there was the driving around endlessly, saying "What the fuck!?! Is this what it takes to get to fuckin' Prague?" So, yeah, there are actually more than a few points … yes, I had a …
Flashback?
T: … a "Proustian rush" we call it in the academy, an unpleasant one.
Did the song "This is Germany" get written out of that experience?
C: Second tour. No, first tour.
T: First tour. The lyrics were taken from a *TV Guide* synopsis of a movie called *It's Alive*. The title, "This is Germany," came from the fact that when we spoke to Germans – many of whom were very pleasant – a number of them, if they were involved in some kind of fucked-up activity, would justify their behaviour by saying, "This is Germany: that's how we do things here." So it's a fine title for a song. They would say, "Your buttons are politically feckless because they don't have a slogan on them," "Libraries should be burned," and "American punks," again, "are ineffective because they are too much like their parents."
That's what you guys were getting criticized for.
P: And we rebutted them with a *TV Guide* synopsis ...
M: … of a B flick.
Or with like maybe a mirror reflection. Of sorts. Sort of?
T: Yeah. I wouldn't want people to think it was some kind of political allegory, because the lyrics go, "A young couple's first baby emerges as a fanged mutant, tears up the delivery room,





1987 - Gilman Street, San Francisco

and goes after a milk truck." I was not writing about the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Got it. O.K. On the first tour, did you record *Mimsy with the Borogoves* when you were there?

C: Yes.

Was that part of the idea of the tour?

C: No, I think it happened because it was successful …

P: We had a week off.

C: … financially, pretty much, we got paid for shows, and we had an accumulation of funds, and we thought, "Wow, we're really pretty tight right now, and there's a studio available, and we have some songs, so let's go in and record them."

Did someone help you get that studio?

P: Daragh's friends knew someone, or it was the one that 2BAD or maybe SPERMBIRDS or someone had used it, and we liked that record or somethin', so …

C: It fulfilled all the requirements. It was available.

The only requirement?

P: And we heard that somebody from somewhere had used it.

C: We should have remembered the last experience we had when that happened, but this one turned out well.

M: It turned out fine.

And the record came out on a German label, didn't it? *Sell-Out Activities*?

C: It came out a year later when we were back.

Did you have an idea that a German label was going to put out the recording at the time?

C: We had a relationship with a fella named Till, who had re-released *Generic Crap*, and Tim was a correspondent with him …

T: He's someone that bought dozens and dozens of *Hayseed Hardcore* records in the '80s, so he had a distribution and then a label, so he re-released *Sing! Generic Crap* and, I think, offered, before I think before we did it? Maybe … don't remember …

C: It was cool, too, that *Sing! Generic Crap* was on swirly vinyl and different coloured vinyl.

That's right. I remember it being called "tutti-fruitti."

C: But we don't know what happened to him.

M: He still has a distribution.

C: We heard there was a fire? He lost everything, I thought …

T: There was a break-in, someone stole a bunch of money, his fax machine, all his electronic stuff, and then he went and borrowed money to replace it, and then it got stolen too, so he just disappeared.

He had to disappear because he owed money.




1987 - Slither Club, Toronto

T: Yeah. That's why the record never got re-pressed, because I think we sold all of our copies before we even came back.

Yeah, people were upset here because they couldn't get it. I remember that being an issue.

C: I remember we each had ten copies for ourselves.

M: But we have the DAT.

Tim, did you also know some of the guys from LÄRM? I thought you might have been penpals with them. I remember Daragh telling me a story about you going out to visit them.

C: Yeah, we all went out.

In the country?

C: Yeah, he lived in a house with a grass roof.

Yeah, like a thatched roof.

T: I met them in 1986; I wrote to someone from their town.

Did you go over there before?

T: Yeah, I went there by myself, and I met this fellow I corresponded with who lived in Amersfoort, the town that they're from, so I went to a practice of theirs and met them …

That must have been neat.

T: Yeah, it was …

Especially when people were just finding out about them.

T: They were fantastically excellent; their singer wasn't there, so it was an all-instrumental practice. I saw an all-instrumental HERESY practice on that same trip as well, but anyway … so I'd met them, and we met them again when we went in 1990 and in 1991.

C: They were SEEIN' RED at the time.

And just before that, there was an *MRR* photozine called *Welcome to Cruise Country*, do you remember this? It was a collaboration with European photos and one of the European bands actually had "SONS OF ISHMAEL" written on their jean shorts. And people from here picked up on it, realizing that you guys were well known outside of here. Did that help with the tour at all?

M: I would say no.

T: It might have reflected the fact that some people there knew who we were, which made it maybe a little easier to book shows.

C: Hadn't we turned down a European tour after *Hayseed Hardcore*?

T: After we came back from the States in 1987.

C: With RAPED TEENAGERS?

T: SO MUCH HATE.

Were they from Norway?

M: The second tour we did of Europe wasn't very successful financially or otherwise …

P: I think it was successful. We spent our money on better accommodations, i.e., a van.

M: I don't think so, dude. I remember breaking even the first time but coming back with a debt the second time.

C: Financially, yes, but we went to more countries …

T: In every way, it was better.

C: … and I saw places I'd never seen before. It was great.

M: Yeah, it was a good vacation.

So the second tour was the next year?

T: September of '91.

Can I ask you about some things on *Mimsy with the Borogoves*?

C: Yes, you can, Stephe: go ahead.

You do a song called "Do Something Radical," which is a polka number.

P: Not so much a polka: it was in ¾ waltz time, which is not really done in punk-rock music.

What was the song about?

P: All the lyrics were not written by me; they were written by a t.v. preacher by the name of Robert Tilton, I believe, and while we were sitting in some guy's house in Michigan or something after a show, the next morning, he was on t.v. It was just a bunch of jumble …

"Shake yourself"?

P: … oh, yeah, these were things he was telling people to get them to send money in …

M: He would speak in tongues.

P: … so I would write it all down: "Keesah buwanda keelbassa" is the first line of the song, it was one of the things he said, and I just wrote it all down and put it together in a song.

You had a few songs that would make fun of religion; one of them was a song that, Paul, you put together, which was just a



televangelist, another speech to music, which was "Evolution is for Turkeys."

P: Oh, yeah, that was a newspaper article that I cut out about Jimmy Swaggart, and I just took all the quotes from him and put them in a country song.

And then Jimmy Swaggart also had his own song, "Jimmy Swaggart Stuck His Pee-Pee in My Poo-Poo."

DD: What was that about? It had a rather cryptic title.

It was about some sex scandal, wasn't it?

T: It was very prescient, actually, because … I'm a huge fan of his and his family's work – he's a hot piano player, just like Jerry Lee Lewis and Mickey Gilley – but, seeing him on t.v., I thought, "This is obviously a twisted, lascivious man," and so I had this vision of a sex crime in his future which, in fact, would come to pass.

M: You know that he is related to Jerry Lee Lewis, right?

T: That's why I said that, yes.

Interesting. Similar.

T: I grew up with deviants. I can spot them a mile away, whether they're on t.v. or not.

There was also another song called "Church Inc."

P: Yeah, I wrote that one.

What was that one about?

P: I think I was in a mall in Albany, New York, and there was a church in the mall. So I thought that you couldn't get more commercial than that.

DD: Actually, you can. I'll send you a picture: There's a church here in town that's been converted to a location for Money Concepts. It's got a big "Money Concepts" sign next to the steeple; it's the funniest thing I've ever seen, man.

What was the song "Umbrella Toenail" about?

T: That was when we were in our art phase …

Experimental phase.

T: … experimental phase, so we were working with the principle of the surrealist juxtaposition of …



2011 - Duffy's Tavern, Toronto, Photo by Mark Hesselink

What is that?

T: … it is when you take two incongruous objects and put them together in order to short-circuit one's mind in order to create a liberating spark. It was part of our political programme to liberate the youth …

"Umbrella" and "toenail" being the two juxtaposed objects?

T: That's correct, Stephe.

DD: That's really a nice way of saying you were drunk when you wrote it.

T: Speak for yourself, Skippy.

P: Tim, what is the song about?

M: Thirty-five seconds.

T: It was thirty-five seconds, and it was the HENRY ROLLINS one, I believe.

M: The music itself was patterned after a HENRY ROLLINS Band song.

"I was walking down Sunset Boulevard …"

T: It might have been poking fun at his pretensions to being a poet in the late '80s, early '90s. So that's what he's screaming: "Angstangstangst umbrella toenail."

Didn't you use HENRY ROLLINS as another scapegoat in other things? No …?

M: No, I think you might be thinking about GUILT PARADE. I know that GUILT PARADE made fun of HENRY ROLLINS on the night that they opened for him. Apparently, that didn't go over very well.

DD: There's a career-limiting move.

I would think. When did the band break up … the second time?

P: It would have been – the second and final time? – the last show was in Ottawa in January of '92, at the Blue Room at the University of Ottawa.

M: So this would have been about two or three months after we came back from our second European tour.

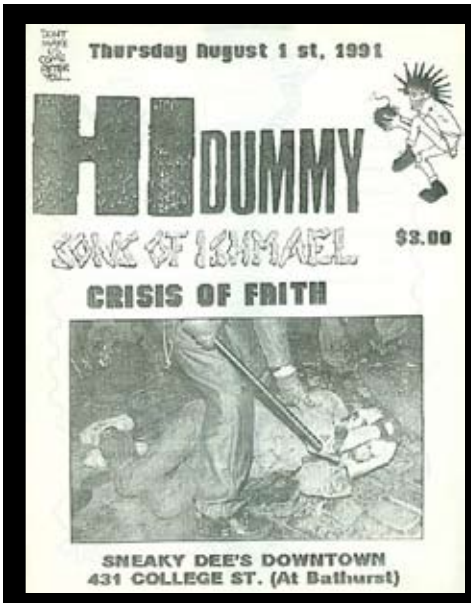
P: I recall we had a meeting or something, and some of us wanted to tour more, and some of us didn't want to at all.

C: The term "charade" was used.

M: That's right. The final, deciding vote was cast as follows: "Well, let's put an end to this charade." And that was it. (*Laughter*)

P: Whose vote was that?

T: Why do you think Daragh said that? (*Laughter*)



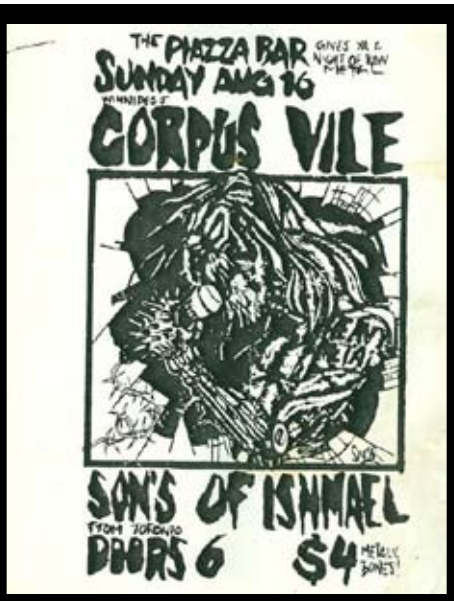




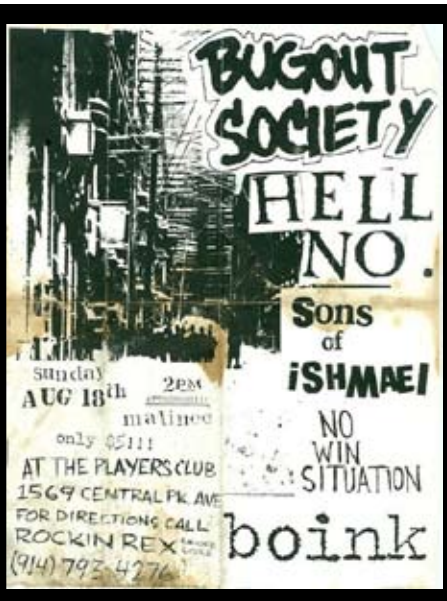
Easy to pick on him.
M: What a bastard.
P: So we played out the final shows, I guess, or was that after … ?
T: That was after, without telling Daragh …
M: And I think I'll take credit for not telling Daragh. That was my screw-up.
P: Daragh wasn't at the last show because he …
M: … he didn't get enough notice, I think. He was working at The Kitchen Table or something.
Kinko's, maybe.
P: That's how I ended up on bass or something like that.
M: I think you and I switched off.
C: So how many shows that weekend? Montreal …
P: I think it was just Ottawa and Montreal.
Would that have been the only time you would have played Quebec?
P: We only ever played Quebec City once and Montreal once.
O.K. There was a blog that I saw called Blogged and Quartered that posted up a download of a discography of almost everything the band recorded, minus the comp tracks.
M: That, we can't talk about: because it's before the courts. We can't ...
Would you plan on doing something similar? Releasing a discography?
M: We have discussed that, actually. We've discussed converting everything to mp3 format and putting it on a website, but it's never really gone beyond discussions.
C: You can find pretty much everything now …
M: True enough, 'though I've never seen *Mimsy with the Borogoves*.
P: I have. If you go on SoulSeek … I don't know if you can give out names …?
This Blogged and Quartered has it, with everything.
M: Really?
DD: I think that's where I got it. They have a lot of stuff I didn't have.
M: Please remit the royalty payment to 666 Spadina Avenue.
DD: And put a thirty-two cent stamp on a one-dollar cheque – way to go. Fifty two?
I think it's up to fifty seven. I'm going to ask each of you what is your favourite SONS OF ISHMAEL song? Each of you, if you could answer this question. And why do you like it? (*Silence*) **Lots of blank faces. Tim, could you start?**
T: Yeah, I like the one that sounds like a pneumatic drill dropped on a cement floor, with the barked, indecipherable lyrics. I can't get enough of that one.
Which song was that?
M: Whatever.
T: The title slips my mind, but …


2011 - Powercage, London, Photo by Anna Tan


1990 - Vienna, Austria







"Discography."
M: Yeah, the whole collection of songs.
DD: I enjoyed "The Hallowe'en Party" …
M: Yeah, I liked that one, too.
DD: … it had some screwed-up riffing in it and stuff. That and "Man and His Penis Sceptre" was fun, too, for the ten seconds of grindy part at the end that wasn't typical for us.
M: The mosh part.
P: Don't forget the RUSH part.
DD: Oh, yeah, yeah, the big RUSH ending …
P: … that we stole from RUSH.
M: "Undulating Blobs" was a good song. That was on *Mimsy with the Borogoves*. It was a Tim song about Jerry Garcia lapsing into a coma while playing on stage with the GRATEFUL DEAD and no one being able to tell the difference. I thought that one was always … I thought that was pretty insightful, and also I got to play a guitar solo.
T: A great one.
And I remember, Tim, I was asking about that song once, and he said, "It's about lava lamps."
T: That, too.
M: That's when you read it at a deeper level.
C: There are songs that I like to listen to – like "Small Town Mentality" is a great song to listen to – but there were songs that I liked to play. I think the ones towards the end that I don't think ever got recorded other than maybe live or maybe practice stuff. You know, like the really fucked-up stuff that reminds me of DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN but ten years earlier. There's a bunch of songs on tapes that are really good, but only towards the end.
That never got recorded.
C: Never got recorded, no.
M: Except off the soundboard.
C: 'Cause they're so fast, and there's different parts to them that are interesting.
E: Paul, do you have an answer?
P: I like "Small Town Mentality." It describes my youth.
C: It was a ripper.
It was. How can people get in touch with the band? I notice you have a MySpace site. Is that the best way?
C: Yeah. You can just go to sonsofishmael.com, and it points to the MySpace page, and from there you can send me a message and I'll forward it to whoever or … whatever. MySpace being passé, try faecesbook instead.
When do you expect the *Schizophrenic* release to come out?
C: Is that what it's called?
***Hayseed Hardcore*. It's the name of the label.**
T: In an e-mail sent to me in the first week of January, Craig said that he was always stubbing his toe on the boxes of records, and he was just waiting for the cover.
So it's already pressed?
T: It's already pressed, it's at his place … yes: he's just waiting for the covers.
M: So, we're going to have a party there, we're going to glue all the covers together.
T: I'm just going to put mine in plastic bags.



1991 - Düsseldorf, Photo by Theun K

Would you consider playing a reunion show?
P: Not me.
DD: If the money's right. (*laughter*)
Was the money ever right?
C: We want five *hundred* dollars.
DD: Who the hell would come to see us? Even at the peak, we got twenty people in Toronto; I think they're dead now.
(Editor's note: SONS OF ISHMAEL played three shows in July/August 2010, one each in London, Hamilton, and Toronto.)
Well, I think people would come to see you. There was some bands more recently that did covers of even "Jimmy Swaggart Stuck His Pee-Pee in My Poo-Poo," a band called Scare Tactic did a cover of that recently.
DD: Cool.
T: Amateurs.
I know that my old band ONE BLOOD did a cover of "Internal Investigation"; you could also make that same claim of amateur.
DD: That's a good one. Nobody's done "Burnt Farmer"? (*laughter*)
M: We did a cover of it for a few years.
P: Why, I don't know.
Anyway, I appreciate you taking the time to talk to us.
Everyone: Thank you Stephe.
M: And Rob. And Ed.

REVIEWS



Arctic Flowers "Reveries" LP
ARCTIC FLOWERS reminds me a lot of a sound that has been nurturing in the scenes in the north west. Vancouver has had the Emergency Room scene that has produced great bands like WHITE LUNG and VAPID. Portland has had bands the OBSERVERS and DEFECT DEFECT. This is the latest incarnation of that WIPERS post punk inspiration. Because I am older I first heard these kind of vocals in bands like LIFE, BUT HOW TO LIVE IT out of Norway and SOFAHEAD who were from the UK. They were female vocals that relied on singing as much as shouting. It was unique to the time and has really found a place in contemporary scenes. The guitars rely on a ringing out strumming that reminds me of GANG OF FOUR meets FUCKED UP. This is the band's third pressing of this record so they must be doing something right. If I were to bastardize this as a this meets that band I would say SPECTRES meets WHITE LUNG, who are both Vancouver bands. But Portland is in the neighbourhood so it makes sense. (Inimical Records – P.O. Box 2803 / Seattle, WA / 98111 / USA / www.inimical.com)



Arson "White Folks" ep
This is the ep originally released by the band back in 1979 on their own Glamatron label. The Ugly Pop re-issue sees the songs flipped so the title track is the B-Side and "Coho Coho" starts out the record. It is a smart idea given the energy to "Coho Coho" is a faster song and as a result stands out because of the energy. But this is the first time I have noticed this crazy effect layered over the entire song. It is like a live wire which is fitting for a band named ARSON. I love the effect. The song has a particular importance to the band who wrote it after observing an anti-disco rally in Chicago. The crowd was chanting something that sounded like "Coho" and so the band wrote a song about it replicating the chanting part at the beginning of the song. The title track is a 33 player. It is a longer song and played slower. It reminds me of the DEMICS "New York City" in terms of pace. Rude's vocals exude an IGGY POP snarl who I have come to learn was an inspiration. "White Folks" is a building critique of the suburbs and Frank Manley breathed new life into the single back in the 90's through the "Smash the State" series. But there is something about having this as a single which has me appreciating it so much more. (Ugly Pop Vinyl - http://uglypop.bigcartel.com/)



Avon Ladies "Guns & Gold" ep
Ding dong, Avon calling. "Guns and Gold" is the AVON LADIES latest line of cosmetic audio surgery. The contempt in Chris's voice is thick like the skin he wears to keep at this for so many years. "Cyanide Lactater" comes off like a FLIPPER trying to cover INFEST's "Fetch the Pliers" if you can imagine that. It's like pure disgust and art damage trying to find some kind of impossible common ground. It's an audio tug-of-war that has not been tried before. And in songs like "Power Failure" I hear elements of "My War" era BLACK FLAG bleeding through. I particularly love the lyrics to this song which challenge rules and power structures that don't have to abide by them. It cuts to the essence of the bullshit behind society making Chris a modern day truth sayer. "They fucking change the rules as they fucking go along, it's hard to believe there's a right when everything is wrong." This made me think back to my days of third year university studying "Crime and Deliquency". The rich write their own rules and the rules don't apply to them was what I came away with from that. The AVON LADIES summed it up in a song called "Power Failure". This is the essence of power. There certainly is gold in this latest ep. (SYG Records – P.O. Box 10455 / Pheonix, AZ / 85064 / USA)



Cripple Bastards "Frammenti de Vita" ep
This is a re-issue of a cover record that CRIPPLE BASTARDS put out about a decade ago. What is great about it is that CRIPPLE BASTARDS do covers of old Italian hardcore bands from various periods. So CRIPPLE BASTARDS cover IMPACT and WRECHED from the "furious years", they cover INDIGESTI and NEGAZIONE from the era after the Furious Years and they cover a bunch of bands that I know nothing about like NABAT, UNDERAGE, and BLUE VOMIT. That is kind of what you want. Stuff that inspires you, stuff that you know, and stuff that you learn from. Because CRIPPLE BASTARDS are a grind band hearing them do that slower mid paced NEGAZIONE cover was the highlight for me. Glad to see *Deep Six* breathe new life into this. (Deep Six Records – P.O. Box 6911 / Burbank, CA / 94510 / USA / www.deepsixrecords.com)



Defect Defect / Daylight Robbery / Foreign Objects "Three Way split" 12"
I have only ever seen one other three way splits. I am not sure this format works very well. The last one didn't because the second band was split with half the material on one side and the other half on the other. And the third band was part way through a side. It just was annoying trying to find their material. But *Dirt Cult* puts all six songs on one side of a 12", so it works more like a compilation.
Portland's DEFECT DEFECT start out this three way with a song that they recorded a different version at our radio show. We spoke about this particular song in the interview and had a laugh about older people in the scene being too jaded to see the value in the current scene. I love the song and the sentiment. "Napalmed Babies and New Palm Trees" has a clever juxtaposition the way the TRANZMITORS "Bigger Houses, Broken Homes" has. I think I love DEFECT DEFECT's stuff best on this collection. Chicago's DAYLIGHT ROBBERIES are a little understated and come off like a cross between GANG OF FOUR meets the MINUTEMEN meets CRASS. The songs are longer and there is interplay between the instruments that is stripped back and draws a spotlight on how great bands like WIRE were. Boston's FOREIGN OBJECTS close out with two short sharp shocks of driving punk. The band features former members of the LIBYANS and the CONVERSIONS and the song "The Numbers" is one of the best from this collection. The collection has taken a long time to release and the features three of the label's favourite bands. This release is a good collection and a great reflection about the label. (Dirt Cult Records – 713 Stagecoach Drive / Las Cruces, NM / 88011 / USA)



Dream Dates, the "Surfer Joe" 45
Here's the third single by this little known Hamilton band that existed in 1979. Just when you thought the well ran dry, Ugly Pop offers up two new covers of unreleased material by the DREAM DATES. The A-side is a cover of the band that brought you "Wipe Out". "Surfer Joe" was a single by the SURFARIS in which "Wipe Out" was the B-Side. How crazy is that? The B-Side is a cover of the 50's rocker Freddy Cannon who was inspired by Chuck Berry. "Tallahassee Lassie" was his first single and it suits Deemer's guitar sound which channels Chuck Berry and Gord Lewis simultaneously. The inner sleeve has a new photo of the DREAM DATES that I have never seen yet and exhibits the rockabilly meets glam punk that was influencing the scene at the time. This is a great addition to the DREAM DATES canon. (Ugly Pop Vinyl - http://uglypop.bigcartel.com/)

Fear of Extinction "Men in Black" ep
This is no ode to the STRANGLERS thankfully as "Men in Black" was one of their worst records. But the singer for the STRANGLERS did do part of a doctorate degree in Sweden and this ep can be considered an homage to Scandinavian hardcore more of the Finnish variety. I hear a lot

of RYTHMIHAIRIO in FEAR OF EXTINCTION's sound. It reminds me a lot of the latest VIIMEINEN KOLLANA single. The bass takes over this recording and drives the whole sound. It is pummeling and quick paced. The sound is more based around power and heaviness and screaming madness. It's ugly and FEAR OF EXTINCTION are intense with their galloping pace. This is the way hardcore should be played. (Phobia Records – www.phobiarecords.net)



Fratricide 12"
FRATRICDE were an incredible crossover band from Vancouver. They happened right at the time that bands like DRI and COC got noticed for doing something unique. FRATRICIDE were right there and judging by the flyers in the liner sheet they played with all of them. It didn't hurt that Jonzo's vocals were exactly like Blain Cook of the ACCUSED. FRATRICIDE were a force to be reckoned with. They had done a split with another local crossover band MISSION OF CHRIST which caught Pushead's ear. He offered the band a split LP which was common for a Pusmort releases back then. FRATRICIDE were to do a split with a Dutch band called NEUROOT who were known for their speed and their politics. There is no doubt in my mind that had this record come out FRATRICIDE would have been propelled into bigger circles. But the folks in the band would go on to do big things regardless. The guitarist started STRAIN and did a well known hardcore radio show called "Flex Your Head" for decades. Jonzo has been singing for HONG KONG BLONDE and have a great ep on Ugly Pop that you can check out if you don't believe me. Thirty test pressings exist of the NEUROOT split and have fetched as much as $1,000 for a copy so that should say something about how good this release was. Instead this became another Canadian hardcore story about missed opportunity reminding me of the YOUNG LIONS or CHRONIC SUBMISSION. Nonetheless it is good to finally hear this material. I can say it is better than the split or the Heart First ep. And Darrin Crosgrove's artwork makes this totally look like a Pusmort release so it suits the release to a T. (Schizorphenic Records -17 West 4th Street / Hamilton, ON / L9C 3M2 / Canada / www.schizophrenicrex.com // Ugly Pop Vinyl - http://uglypop.bigcartel.com/)



Generation Hexed "You say you won't like it… but you will" CD
GENERATION HEXED are from Barrie and were in a band formerly known as BROWN BELT. Rob Freeborn, who used to sing for FLECKS OF DROOL and is the little brother of Tim Freeborn from SONS OF ISHMAEL does vocals here. At times he sounds like Chi Pig from SNFU and at other times I hear the pentameter of Dan Rudbal of OCTOBER CRISIS / BLACK DONNELLYS fame. Ditch Dog, of SONS OF ISHMAEL, plays guitar but not in the way he did for SOI. He is rockin' out with a crossover garage/metal sound carved out by bands like TURBONEGRO. Scott Maxton, of BSL fame, keeps time in a charging style characteristic of DISCHARGE or MOTORHEAD. But this is no d-beat band. (Generation Hexed – 69 Oakley Park Square / Barrie, ON / L4M 2K4 / Canada / generationhexedband@gmail.com / www.generationhexedband.blogspot.com)



HDQ "Hung, Drawn and Quartered / You Suck!" CD
HDQ were a hardcore band from Sunderland that took their inspiration from the US scene in bands like MINOR THREAT, DAG NASTY, and BAD BRAINS. They were part of a wave of European bands that included bands like NEGAZIONE from Italy, GRB from Barcelona, the STUPIDS from England and countless others. Sunderland is a small northern scene as close to the Scottish border as it gets. This is not the first collection of HDQ material that *Boss Tuneage* has pulled together, but it does represent the band's early stuff. In fact the name of the release comes from the band's first two releases, but this CD also collects two other demoes and two other eps. There is a lot packed on here. And according to the Dickie Hammond's opinion this was the band's best material, but he does recognize that this period is almost like listening to a different band. Dickie would become the band's guitarist and I think it is important to note that there may be HDQ fans that prefer only specific periods of the band's history. I have to say that this is my favourite era of the band's music. It is super fast with melody and you can hear how bands like 7 SECONDS were an influence. Musically I would say that it is part DAG NASTY, part 7 SECONDS, part SNFU, part UPRIGHT CITIZENS. The band covers DOA's "Race Riot" at the end of "You Suck" which is a highlight for me given that I love DOA. What I do know about that release is that it originally came out on *Meantime* Records. The first three songs were originally intended to come out as a single on *Endangered*, but that fell through so the band recorded 8 more songs to make it a full length. It is probably my favourite material of the lot. "Believe" was a four song ep that came out around 1989 and sounds a bit more like that maturing melodic sound that 7 SECONDS were trying to pimp on "New Wind". The material on here reminds me of a different band from Vancouver who were out at the time called DESPERATE MINDS. This four song ep was originally released on *Looney Tunes* and has been described as thinly produced. It certainly sounded a bit more like the REPLACEMENTS or later period NILS. It fit in with other sounds developing out of hardcore at the time. There are demoes and other ep tracks on here but essentially this collection is early material by the band that would go on to make up the majority of LEATHERFACE. HDQ is very different stuff which signifies LEATHERFACE's hardcore past and some of the band's experimentation that would make them the force that LEATHERFACE became. (Boss Tuneage – P.O. Box 74 / Sandy / SG19 2WB / UK / www.bosstuneage.com)



Kicker "Broke" ep
Here's another band of scene veterans featuring guys who have played in the likes of NEUROSIS, FILTH, and DYSTOPIA and they are going after a demented brand of '77 styled punk with references about lager and chips on the band's website. Regardless this is a departure from NEUROSIS and DYSTOPIA. I mean I know we all love punk deep down but band's like NEUROSIS and DYSTOPIA have embraced developments out of punk that are way harsher than the back to roots brand of punk that KICKER perform. And yet KICKER are not your average street punk sound. The opening song drones along in almost a CRASS like way and reminds me "Oi oi oi, Working Class Ripoff". And if the band didn't have more than one release out I would figure it was just some sort of project band like MATURE SITUATIONS taking the piss out of it. But the song "Walking Headache" seems real enough in a SEX PISTOLS sort of way. "Broke" also contains a decent version of SOA's "Public Defender" which is slower than SOA which speaks to the band's sound. Their version makes it a bit of a punk reclamation of a hardcore song which is neat when you think about it. (Inimical Records – P.O. Box 2803 / Seattle, WA / 98111 / USA / www.inimical.com)



Lautsturmer "Man fods, stamplar in, och hoppas att man inte blir sarskilt gammal" ep
LAUTSTURMER are from Sweden's side of the Copenhagen border, which seems to be a magical place for hardcore with bands as great as INTENSITY coming from there. LAUTSTURMER are more along the lines of traditional Scandi inspired hardcore, which makes sense if you know the band features former and current members of DRILLER KILLER who used to be members ANTI-CIMEX. But LAUTSTURMER have more of a back to basics sound in a NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS kind of way. They borrow from a back to basics punk sound and a kang sound. It's bizarre, but it works so well. Makes me think these guys have been



paying attention to the trends in a back to the punk roots sound that is going on worldwide, just giving it their own twist. (Not Enough – poststugan 144 / 211 65 Malmo / Sweden / www.notenough.se)



Low Threat Profile "There's no fucking way I'm going out like the rest beaten and broken just a fucked up mess I watch them daily as the herd goes by neutered and gagged just waiting to die" LP
This is the band's first full length. The release came out earlier this year and the band is a power violence wet dream featuring the singer from NO COMMENT, the guitarist from INFEST, and the drummer from LACK OF INTEREST and *Deep Six*. I understand they have a newer ep that has come out without the singer, but I have to believe that this is the dream team. The first ep destroyed and this full length is more of the same. Raw and fast with cutting lyrics. No bullshit hardcore that just rips from start to finish. Even the samples are biting. This is the blueprint on how to do hardcore. Hands down my favourite thing to come out in a decade. Funny because the music was written in the fall of 2000. And the lyrics for "My one and only true love" which as you might guess is a love song written about hardcore. It is great how it leads right into a repeating outro track. As the English seem to sum up this (the new LOW THREAT PROFILE) is brilliant. (Deep Six Records – P.O. Box 6911 / Burbank, CA / 94510 / USA / www.deepsixrecords.com)



Much Worse "Proper Execute" ep
Have you ever wondered what it would sound like to take "Sold-Out" era GANG GREEN and combine it with some amped up garage, like NBT. If you are from Japan it would be a mash up of early EXCLAIM meets SMASH YOUR FACE. If you are from the south it would be like a mash up RUNNAMUCKS meets NASHVILLE PUSSY. Wherever you are from MUCH WORSE are exciting and mind melding at every twist and turn. Bedroom moshing and cranial damaging head banging awaits you as a soundtrack for this disk. Think of bands like BRAIN HANDLE and DOUBLE NEGATIVE as reference points on how to get into this. (Pass Judgement – 2140 W Crystral Street 38 / Chicago, IL / 60622 / USA)



Negative Lifestyle "Panic" ep
NEGATIVE LIFESTYLE have this cleanly played scrappy guitar sound that draws on early rock 'n roll. It is the absence of distortion that gives me that feel. But they play with a pace of the earlier hardcore bands. And the vocalist reminds me of Keith Morris which gives them that CICRLE JERKS feel. It doesn't hurt that "Trying to fit in" sounds like "Operation Innuendo". But the CIRCLE JERKS appreciation comes off the same way it did for the REGULATIONS. They were an influence for the band to build a sound around. "Panic" has a lot of uncharted territory and depth in their sound and song structures. Songs like "Reading to avoid thinking" demonstrate the creativity that NL bring to the table. The title track is a ripper demonstrating the band's energy and commitment to the adrenalin of this subculture. This ep demonstrates an appreciation for the roots of punk while taking that sound in new directions. They are all originals and the single crams seven songs on an ep without noticing it. (Deranged Records – P.O. Box 21534 / Vancouver, BC / V5L 5G2 / Canada / www.derangedrecords.com)



Neighborhood Brats "We Own the Night" ep
From the opening drum intro "We Own the Night" sounds like a cover of "Lights Out". Then the guitars kick in and the song takes on a NEW BOMB TURKS flare. The song sounds like an instant classic and reminds me of CAREER SUICIDE or BRUTAL KNIGHTS meets the BAYONETTES. The B-side is a cover of a classic San Francisco punk band the VKTMS. I was reading on-line about the various interpretation and re-interpretations of the song and it does reflect a certain fear about being a girl and living in San Francisco and being a punk girl. I'm not sure that was the reason why the NEIGHBORHOOD BRATS did this song. They probably did the song because the band was from San Francisco, it is a classic, and they had a female singer which would make it a good fit for a cover. I have never heard the original so I don't know how they do with the cover, but I can say that I like their version because I thought it was an original. It fits in with the NEIGHBORHOOD BRATS sound. This single is extremely well done. (Abscess Records – 424 Ellis St. #611 / San Francisco,CA / 94102 / USA / www.abscesstrax.com)



P.R.O.B.L.E.M.S. "Cold Cold Rain / The Things I Know" ep
This is P.R.O.B.L.E.M.S. fourth ep. It is non-stop barrelling punk like the shit that the band's that they played in prior did. Punk oozes out of this single in that fast dirty rock n roll sound that bands like the HELLACOPTERS perfected. But the subject matter comes from lived experience. "Why do I sit around in the cold cold rain?" has to be about Portland. "These are the things I know" is pretty obvious. NEW BOMB TURKS meets TURBO-NEGRO. And limited pressing, self-released, clear see through vinyl and you have a record that is going to be a collector's item by next month. (Doomtown Sound – kellymotxo@hotmail.com / Power Blaster – www.powerblasterrecords.com)



Raw Nerves "Burnt Skin" ep
"Burnt Skin" represents RAW NERVES fifth release, but it is the band's first release in over a year. The vocalist reminds me of the singer from ECONOCHRIST or POISON IDEA. The music is accented by a buzzsaw guitar sound that reminds me of BURY THE LIVING or BORN/DEAD. Side A has the rippers, Side B has a stalker soundtrack. It's all pretty menacing, harsh, and raw all the time while building. This is how I love my hardcore. (Inimical Records – P.O. Box 2803 / Seattle, WA / 98111 / USA / www.inimical.com)



Roach Motel "It's Lonely at the Top" LP
ROACH MOTEL were a hardcore band from 1980 – 1984. The band featured *MRR* columnist George Tabb who was prone to writing short melodic ditties. ROACH MOTEL is more in the hardcore vein and reminds me a lot of early BLACK FLAG on speed without the Ginn chord gnashing damage. This is not the only post-humous release by this band. I seem to remember a split that came out with HATED YOUTH not too long ago. But it couldn't have been that much as this LP is loaded with songs on each side. There are explanations into each song and a flyer collage to envy given how many great bands ROACH MOTEL got to play with. There is some choice live footage here with great banter. This is a great all round collection of stuff with lots of thought going into songs that made it on here. (Florida's Dead – 2436 E Robinson Street / Orlando, FL / 32803 / USA / www.floridasdying.com)



Systematic Death "Systema-8" ep
As the record titles suggests this is SYSTEMATIC DEATH's eigth release and it represents a return to form. SYSTEMATIC DEATH travels between charging sound of Japacore and the racing style of fastcore, which is why I think I love them so much. The heaviness and some of the flourishes in musicianship of the traditional burning spirits is attempted here but the rock trappings are dispensed with in order to keep this fast so you realize that they are a hardcore band. This is coupled with the gang back ups and vocal interplay that remind one of GAUZE or STALIN and that makes "Systema-8" an instant classic.

"Born in Japan" and "Man Made" are my favourites on this release. (Way Back When – Taskinlaan 9 / 2361XM Warmond / The Netherlands / www.waybackwhenrecords.com // Even Worse Records - van ostadestr 93-f / 1072sr, Amsterdam / The Netherlands / http://evenworserecords.com/)



Triac "Always meant to hurt you" ep
TRIAC are the latest band from Baltimore and they dish out the grindcore like nobody's business. It is a pummeling pentameter that borders on over modulating crescendos that crackle the speakers into oblivion. When Spinal Tap talked about cranking it to eleven TRIAC is what they were talking about. It's good to finally hear a band that can live up to the claim. Think of band's like DYSTOPIA colliding with PISSED HAPPY CHILDREN. TRIAC would be that result of that happy misfortune. This was originally released as a tour only tape but *A389* has gone and pressed it for us powerviolence fanatics. (A389 Records - P.O. Box 12058 / Baltimore, MD / 21281 / USA / www.a389records.com)



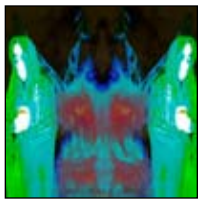
Viimeinen Kolonna "Luonnoton Poistuma" ep
This band has been around for ten years now. This represents the band's sixth single and their eighth release. They are a crust band from Helsinki and have been likened to bands like DISCLOSE and TOTUUS. In this latest release I hear more of a RYTMIHAIRIO kind of direction. Sure the songs are short and fast, but they are now sludgy and heavy as well. In some ways this is in keeping with the band's philosophy to replicate an early Finnish hardcore back to basics sound. Elements of RYTMIHAIRIO define early Finnish hardcore. The lyrics are barked out. The vocals are more baritone, there is a slight echo effect on them to give them a bowels of hell kind of feel. At first I didn't like the development but upon second thought I would have to say this is exactly in keeping with the early Finnish hardcore sound. (Roku Records – Ville Vuorjoki / Kemintie 1488 / 97130 Hirvas / Finland / www.rokurecords.com // Gasmask Records – Cesky Heralec 71 / 592 01 Heralec P/H / Czech Republic / wwwmaskcontrol.com // Psychedelica Records – www.psychedelica.fi)

Wake "Leeches" CD
WAKE are a new band from Calgary, but unlike some of the other bands we know the city for like KNUCKLEHEAD and SPASTIC PANTHERS, WAKE play a power violence inspired style of grindcore. They remind me of the style of intense barrage of dark sounding hardcore that the SWARM first came up with after listening to bands like ACME and MORSER from Europe. I think at the time it was being called emo-crust or something like that. Well WAKE veer more towards the speed and intensity of grind and the heavy interludes brought out by the juxtaposing slow fast parts of power violence. That's why I keep thinking of the SWARM. And in an interview on the Grind and Punishment blog credits the guitarist finding out about NAPALM DEATH through Mortal Kombat as a door into the world of grind. Although comparisons can be made to some of the grind side projects that have come out of DFA like POSER DISPOSER and REHASHED, WAKE's material stands on its own in terms of intensity and genre bending. The song "Vigil" has some of the TRAGEDY layered guitar work that made SWARM unique. But it is the time changes in this song and the band's ability to try something other than four – four timing that make them trail blazers in this genre. WAKE don't fall into the trap of playing too blur sounding so that one can't appreciate the speed. But they are no couch slouches in the speed department either. They can pummel and barrage and make it intense, which is what you want. I do have one complaint and that is with the packaging. Tone on tone artwork can work with graphics but not with lyrics. I can't make out any of the lyrics which I guess is alright if you don't want people to know what you are singing about, but this is punk and it is kind of a given that you have something to say. So why hide them in plain sight? Some good news for vinyl-holics, this recording has just been pressed by 7 Degrees Records onto an LP. (Hearing Aids – hearingaidsrecords.bandcamp.com)



Warhead "Acceleration / This World of Confusion" ep
This is the first release in seven years since their split with ORDER and twenty years since their "Cry of Truth" debut. Living in the legends of Japan's elite scene of bands like DEATHSIDE, GAUZE and BASTARD, WARHEAD have fortified their sound with the former guitarist of GLOOM / FRAMTID. Jacky has kept the fire burning in the Kyoto crust scene for decades and his trademark wall of distortion sound defines this new ep. It is harsh and brutal in an ear piercing kind of way and if you don't have ear damage after a few listens then you were probably in trouble from a hearing impairment standpoint already. This is one band that did not tame down their sound over the years. I would also consider this a double A side release as both songs are equally pummeling. (HG Fact - 105 Nakano Shinbashi M. / 2-7-15 Yayoi-Cho, Nakano / Tokyo, Japan / 164-0013 / http://www.interq.or.jp/japan/hgfact/)

Weekend Nachos "Black Earth" ep
I have heard some describe this as a return to form for WEEKEND NACHOS, but when you don't have a frame of reference that makes this description meaningless. This is a band from Chicago that combines essences of power violence and TRAGEDY core to slaughter you with every note belted out. The title track is an all out assault that may be noisey in a crust sort of way. This song is the standout with a pummeling breakdown that digresses into soul shattering slow-core and is into the next track without even noticing. This is a song transition that rivals POISON IDEA. WEEKEND NACHOS have the ability to start and stop on a dime and can really play up the fast and slow of power violence, which is particularly evident in the re-make of "Priorities" a song that originally appeared on the "This comp Kills Fascists". This also appeared on the "Worthless" LP that came out on *Deep Six*. "No Saints" is where the all out attack shines and the band explores all these inspirations. It's part bro-core, part Trag core, part power violence. WEEKEND NACHOS have developed a unique mash up of styles and it works. That is hard to say in this day and age. (A389 Records – P.O. Box 12058 / Baltimore, MD / 21281 / USA / www.a389records.com)



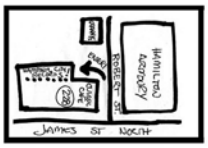
Witch-Lord "Atomized in the black solarian" LP
WITCH-LORD was another GEHENNA side project. This is a lot slower than GEHENNA's material although I heard a reviewer say that if you listen to GEHENNA's material enough you can hear this as the direction they were going towards. This borrows from SABBATH and BASTARD NOISE to make for a torturous and pummeling listen. The vocals sound like a tortured soul whispering through a demon channeling. The cover artwork looks like the acid bright colours found on the House of Frightenstein. Trippy and torturous for SABBATH fans. (A389 Records – P.O. Box 12058 / Baltimore, MD / 21281 / USA / www.a389records.com)



Zlodzieje Rowerow "emo'la" Dbl LP
ZLODZIEJE ROWEROW line up on the more muscle sounding guitar of bands like VERBAL ASSAULT and UNDERDOG. There is a lot of rhythm to the music which sacrifices the speed, but they make up for it in terms of heaviness. From what I can make out in the liner notes some of this was recorded back in 1998. But this isn't a mere re-issue. ZLODZIEJE ROWEROW have been a band this long and have just called it quits. So this collection also features three new unreleased songs. (Refuse Records - http://refuserecords.prv.pl/)

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Nardwuar The Human Serviette and The Evaporators present...

Busy Doing Nothing!

white spatter vinyl compilation LP (with digital download AND a free 40-page calendar!)
#MRL-140 • Release date: March 6, 2012



- White splattered 12 song vinyl LP features **ANDREW W.K.**, **THE EVAPORATORS, FRANZ FERDINAND, THE CRIBS, FUAD AND THE FEZTONES, KATE NASH, JILL BARBER,** and **SAGE FRANCIS** all showing their love for Canadian punk heritage preservation! (Many of the songs on LP are covers of Legendary Vancouver, BC Punk Bands)
- Inserted inside the LP jacket is a 40 page free Calendar of Vintage 1970s Punk Rock Photos taken by Legendary Vancouver, BC Punk Photographer **Bev Davies**.
- Assembled by Vancouver Punk Rock Journalist/Evaporators singer, **Nardwuar the Human Serviette**.

Tracklisting:

Side Nard

1. The Evaporators & Andrew W.K.
"I Hate Being Late When I'm Early" (The Evaporators/Andrew W.K.)
– This is an original song, a collaboration between **Andrew W.K.** and Nardwuar's band, **The Evaporators**.

2. The Cribs "Death In The Family" (The Dishrags)
– **The Cribs** are from Wakefield, England and cover Vancouver All Girl 1970s Punk Band **The Dishrags**.

3. Kate Nash "My Chinchilla" (Cub)
– **Kate Nash** is from London and covers **Cub**, a Vancouver 1990s All Girl "Cud-dlecore" band and the signature act on Mint Records.

4. Franz Ferdinand "Real Thing" (Pointed Sticks)
– **Franz Ferdinand** are from Glasgow and cover Legendary Vancouver 1970s Punk Band, the **Pointed Sticks**!

5. Fuad & The Feztones "Welcome To My Castle" (The Evaporators)
– This is **Bobby** and **John** from Montreal's legendary **The Gruesomes**. They (as **Fuad & The Feztones**) are covering (Nardwuar's band) The Evaporators' first single from 1992.

6. The Evaporators ft. Sage Francis/Xaul Zan & Megan Barnes "Hot Dog High" (The Evaporators/Sage Francis/Xaul Zan)
– **Sage Francis** raps on a verse for this Evaporators Original. Sage Francis runs Strange Famous Records and has released records thru ANTI-.

Side Wuar

1. The Evaporators "Busy Doing Nothing" (The Evaporators)
– An Evaporators original and the title track.

2. The Evaporators ft. Jill Barber & Andrew W.K. "Bring it On Home" (Doug Rutledge)
– This is a cover tune by **Doug Rutledge**, a 1970s Rockabilly/ Truckdriver. Canadian singer-songwriter **Jill Barber** duets with Nardwuar on this track. **Andrew W.K.** also adds piano and organ.

3. The Evaporators "Milkshake Murder" (The Evaporators)
– This is an Evaporators Original.

4. The Evaporators "Bunk" (The Evaporators)
– This is an Evaporators Original.

5. The Evaporators "Pig War" (The Evaporators)
– This is an Evaporators Original.

6. The Evaporators "All The Bad Girls" (Pointed Sticks)
– This is a Cover of Legendary Vancouver 1970's Punk Band, the **Pointed Sticks**.

7. *Interview* "Nardwuar vs. Franz Ferdinand"
– This is a clip from the first interview Nardwuar ever did with **Franz Ferdinand**.



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